

Ex-Nicaragua president gets 20 years

Story in World, PAGE A8

GMA declares Xmas ceasefire with Reds

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday declared a ceasefire with communist dissidents "in the spirit of the Christmas season," even as military authorities reported that three New People's Army (NPA) members were killed in clashes with government forces.

GMA/A7



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P15



AFP: Greed did Robot in

Abaya says capture puts closure to Sipadan case

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau
and TJ Burgonio

IT WAS "greed" that did him in.

The Abu Sayyaf leader known as Commander Robot was planning another kidnapping when he was captured in Sunday's shoot-out, the Armed Forces chief of staff told reporters yesterday.

"He surfaced supposedly to coordinate and plan another kidnapping. He had plans to conduct kidnappings again in Jolo," Gen. Narciso Abaya told reporters.

"It's greed; he had gotten a lot of money, but it seems his need for money was endless because of his many wives."

After the encounter in Indanan, Sulu, where Robot was seriously wounded in both legs, the bandit leader was flown by helicopter to Zamboanga City. There, a woman whom the group had previously kidnapped rushed at Robot, whose real name is Galib Andang, and rained blows on him.

The woman was hysterical and had to be pulled away.

As doctors changed Andang's bandages at the Edwin Andrews Air Base hospital, a crowd of civilians screamed curses and obscenities at the man who had once flaunted his frightened hostages before the press like prized pets.

Andang was then flown to Manila and at about 4 p.m., he was brought on a stretcher to the Camp Aguinaldo Station Hospital in Quezon City, escorted by heavily armed soldiers.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko told reporters in Zamboanga City that Andang might lose both his legs "because his feet are seriously affected and the damage brought about by bullet wounds requires immediate amputation."

Abaya said the AFP was thankful Andang was greedy because it "turned him in or was the cause of his downfall."

He also said Andang's capture brought "a closure to the Sipadan hostage crisis" of 2000, noting that most of the 13 Abu

AFP/A18



CAPTURED



KHADAFFY Janjalani: Highest ranking Abu Sayyaf leader who remains unaccounted for. PDI PHOTO

GALIB Andang, alias Commander Robot, grimaces in pain as he is carried from a military plane at Villamor Air Base to be treated for bullet wounds he suffered during an encounter with government soldiers in Sulu.

ROGER MARGALLO

He looked harmless, but was ruthless to victims

By TJ Burgonio

TO HIS victims, he was ruthless. To hostage negotiators who dealt with him, Abu Sayyaf leader Galib Andang, alias Commander Robot, looked like he couldn't harm a fly.

"Robot looks harmless kapag kaharap mo dahil laging nakangiti (because he's always smiling)," recalled Robert Aventajado, former President Joseph Estrada's adviser on flagship projects.

Aventajado met with Andang and other Sulu-based Abu Sayyaf leaders

in Bandang, Talipao in 2000, to negotiate the release of the Sipadan hostages. He was accompanied to the meeting place, an abandoned mosque, by Libyan Ambassador to the Philippines Rajab Azzarouq and former Sulu Gov. Sakur Tan.

But Andang, acknowledged as the architect of the raid on the Malaysian diving resort of Sipadan, was known to be ruthless with his hostages. One of them—the son of a local doctor—was beheaded after delays in ransom payment.

HE LOOKED/A18

Gov't lawyers join clamor for stay of executions

By Volt Contreras
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A GOVERNMENT agency providing free legal service to poor people on death row yesterday appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to reconsider her lifting of the four-year moratorium on lethal injections, saying innocent convicts were at risk of being executed.

Persida Acosta, chief of the Public Attorney's Office, said the PAO had secured the acquittal of 30 death row convicts and the commutation of 130 death sentences since Ms Macapagal took over the presidency in January 2001.

Acosta said the PAO had "a 50-percent winning rate" on its appeals of death penalty cases before the Supreme Court.

"This is proof that not all death convicts are criminals, that there may be innocent persons who will be executed," she said, adding that clients whom the PAO had saved from the death chamber were usually "mere victims of lapses in due process."

The PAO "fully respects" Ms Macapagal's decision, Acosta told the INQUIRER. "However, we're appealing on behalf of our clients that it be further studied."

The agency is currently handling about 400 death row cases, according to her. About 1,000 people are on death row, convicted of kidnapping, murder, rape, possession of large amounts of illegal drugs and other heinous crimes.

Acosta said that no less than Chief Justice Hilario Davide had consistently lauded the PAO's performance in saving death row inmates, particularly the poor ones.

Despite appeals by the PAO, the Catholic Church and other groups for Ms Macapagal to reconsider her selective imposition of the death penalty, she is not likely to grant reprieves to convicted kidnappers and drug lords scheduled for execution beginning next month.

"The President is definite, she will not change her mind on this policy decision until Congress changes the

GOV'T LAWYERS/A18

Caloocan firemen lead 117 heroes

By Tarra Quismundo
Metro

A PLACE called the Heroes Del 96 in Caloocan City finally lived up to its name. The firefighters who put out a fire on this road last year were declared heroes yesterday.

Eight men from the Caloocan Fire Station were among the firefighters, policemen and civilians who received awards

from Patrol 117 to recognize the men and women who responded to emergencies last year.

"We are very happy, and the morale of my men is high. It's our fulfillment as firemen," said Chief Insp. Agapito Nacario, head of the Caloocan Fire Department, whose team received the Best Responder Award for Fire.

On the afternoon of March 28, 2002, Holy Thursday, the fire department's

yearly *pabasa* (reading of the Passion) was halted by an alarm from Patrol 117.

The emergency call center received a call from an Aling Virgie that a fire had broken out in one of the homes in a residential compound on Heroes Del 96, a road that connects 10th Avenue with Samson Road.

When two fire trucks arrived at the scene, 12 houses were already ablaze. As

CALOOCAN/A4

FPJ camp ready to talk with Lacson's

By Michael Lim Ubac

AFTER BEING declared the standard-bearer of the opposition coalition, actor Fernando Poe Jr. is now willing to talk to Sen. Panfilo Lacson, another opposition presidential aspirant.

Speaking through his campaign manager, Senate Minority Leader Vicente Sotto III, the actor said he has accepted Lacson's invitation for them to meet and discuss the fate of the coalition.

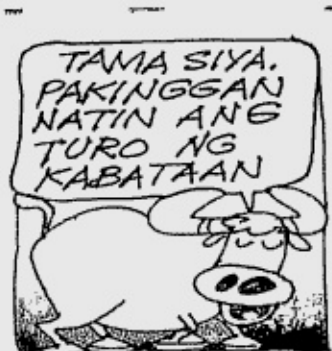
"He told me that he was open to talks," said Sotto, referring to Poe.

But Sotto said the actor objected to a one-on-one meeting with Lacson. "No private talks," but a dialogue between the two camps, he said.

He said the Lacson camp should set the time and date for the meeting, which is being pushed by the Lacson camp led by Representatives Agapito "Butz" Aquino and Ronaldo Zamora as a last-ditch effort to unite the opposition.

On Saturday, Sotto said the proposal for a one-on-one meeting had been over-

FPJ/A18



17-year-old 'PNP chief' raps bickering

By Christian V. Esguerra

COMES a much-needed break for the country's top cop.

Embattled Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. gets off his hotly contested seat for three working days starting Thursday, amid controversies surrounding a recent top-to-bottom revamp.

Ebdane's replacement, Antonio Paolo Gutierrez of Quezon City,

17-YEAR-OLD/A4



INTERIOR Secretary Jose Lina, along with INQUIRER president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, honors members of the Caloocan City Fire Department for rescuing three children (front row) during a fire last year.

JUN CAPULONG

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northeastern Luzon will have cloudy skies with rains. Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA
COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/12/09/03

Second FRONT PAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Bagui	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Taguig	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laos	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

12,500 POSTS AT STAKE

450,000 seen running in '04 polls

By Martin P. Marfil

NEXT YEAR'S May elections may not only be the most expensive but the most chaotic with about half a million candidates seen running for only 12,500 national and local elective positions.

The Commission on Elections fear that the large number of candidates could cause them problems since this would mean more paper for the ballots which could cost an

additional P350 to P400 million.

For voters, this would mean a more time-consuming effort just to look for their favored poll bets from a voluminous list of candidates.

Comelec lawyer Aleodin Dalaig said they expect about 450,000 candidates to file their applications for the May 2004 elections starting Dec. 15, the first day of filing of certificates of candidacies. The filing period ends on Jan. 2 next year.

These candidates will be running for about 12,500 national and local elective positions in the

country's 1,614 cities and municipalities and 79 provinces.

The Comelec noted that only about 100,000 poll bets filed their candidacies in the 1998 elections.

One of the reasons cited for the large number of candidates is the Fair Election Act or Republic Act 9006 which the Comelec wants amended.

Under RA 9006, any Filipino who

occupies an elective post can retain his or her post—until his or her term expires—even if the individual chooses to run for another position.

The commission wants this law amended so that when an elective official decides to run for another public office, he should first resign.

This amendment, the Comelec said, would reduce the number of candidates, especially now that it

is set to implement nationwide computerized elections.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos, in another interview, said the commission is set to discuss electoral concerns today such as the bidding for the elections materials and the accreditation of various political parties.

The Comelec has set Dec. 15 as the deadline for the accreditation of political parties.

Roco says no to team up with GMA

By Dona Pazzibugan

FORMER senator and presidential aspirant Raul Roco yesterday rejected outright a possible team up with President Macapagal-Arroyo in next year's elections.

"That's politically impossible," Roco said in an interview over dzRH in reaction to reports that the President told Liberal party leaders she was "open" to a possible tandem with her former education secretary.

Roco, the presidential standard-bearer of the Alliance of Hope, maintained that the public clamor now is for a change of administration.

"The only question in the people's minds is whom to replace it with," he said.

He added that no one from Ms Macapagal's camp has approached him recently to suggest a tandem with the President.

Roco's rejection of a possible GMA-Roco tandem drew angry reactions from congressmen belonging to the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Reps. Exequiel Javier of Antique, Augusto Syjuco of Iloilo, Aurelio Umali of Nueva Ecija and Wilhelmino Sy-Alvarado of Bulacan yesterday said that Roco's rejection was an act of arrogance, saying he should make a "reality check" because he has no chance at all against the President.

This was the second time that Roco rejected overtures from Malacanang for a possible team up.

In October, Roco disclosed that

the President's representatives went to see him to ask him to be her running mate. Roco declined, insisting on gunning for the presidency for the second time.

LP chair Sen. Francis Pangilinan earlier said that during a meeting Saturday with LP leaders, Ms Macapagal said she was open to a possible team up with Roco.

The Liberal Party has started holding talks with presidential bets in search of the one they would support.

Roco is expected to meet with LP officials this week to discuss his platform. LP members are said to be choosing whom to endorse between Ms Macapagal and Roco.

Instead of talking about a tandem, Roco said yesterday that the President's men should convince her to withdraw from the presidential race.

He said he has in his staff a classmate of housing chief Mike Defensor, whom Ms Macapagal recently designated as her "political spokesperson."

"If Mike Defensor would talk to Patrick Gregorio, Gregorio would convince him to ask GMA to withdraw," said Roco, who recently joined forces with former presidential rivals Rene de Villa and Lito Osmeña to boost his campaign.

Their parties—Roco's Aksyon Demokratiko, De Villa's Reporma and Osmeña's Promdi formed the so-called "Alliance of Hope."

But Roco has yet to name his running mate and his senatorial slate.

So far, Roco has announced that his senatorial lineup would include re-electionist Sen. Rodol-



ROCO



MACAPAGAL

fo Biazon, who recently bolted the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong

Pilipino, former solicitor general Frank Chavez and lawyer Mel Mauricio.

In the interview yesterday, Ro-

co said Olympic bowling gold medalist Bong Co would likely be included in his slate.

National candidates can file their certificates of candidacy from Dec. 15 to Jan. 2. *With a report from Cynthia D. Balana*

OPEN LETTER TO SECRETARY VINCENT PEREZ, JR.

Honorable Vincent Perez, Jr.
Secretary
Department of Energy

Dear Secretary Perez,

In recent weeks, there has been a spate of increases in the price of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). Considering that LPG is a basic commodity, hardest hit by this is the consuming public as end-user. The inadequate, if not delayed, information released to the public regarding such price increases created a lot of tension in the market. The consuming public is always the last to know resulting in altercations and verbal conflict with dealers.

The Oil Deregulation Law has been a source of relief because the independent LPG players are at least able to provide an alternative market offering low prices. It can be said that in areas where there are no independent LPG refillers and marketers, the price of LPG is generally higher by P20.00 to P30.00 for an 11 kg cylinder.

It is true that the pricing of petroleum products is no longer set by the government. It should not, however, be a cause for helplessness on the part of the government. As the lead agency tasked to monitor daily international and local prices of petroleum products, should not the Department of Energy (DOE) initiate efforts to immediately announce in mass media adjustments in the price of LPG? The Department of Trade & Industry has conscientiously done its job insofar as other consumer goods are concerned. It is equally expected of the DOE to perform its mandate. If the DOE shirks from its responsibility, transparency which is essential in a deregulated regime will be lost and the lack of information may result into capricious price settings.

The regulatory power of the DOE must be exercised always with the view to promote public welfare. It will be pro-people policy if the DOE advocate the refilling and resealing by independent LPG refillers and marketers of all types of cylinders for as long as these cylinders are repainted with the brand name of the refiller or marketer. It is not uncommon for LPG cylinders in circulation to change hands from one industry player to another. The DOE should not close its eyes that at a time of rising prices, consumers put premium on price rather than LPG brand. With the DOE unable to control prices, the only way it could help ease the burden of the consuming public is to allow independent LPG refillers and marketers to refill and reseal all type of cylinders and then sell the same at more affordable prices.

The problem that beset the LPG industry are unending. The independent LPG refillers and marketers have never failed to bring across their concerns to the DOE. As it is, their issues have not been met with enthusiasm and genuine concern at the expense of public welfare. Resort to media is always reserved for last. This open letter is an indication of the lack of effective channels of communication in the Office of the Secretary of the DOE, and the lack of action on proposals to better serve the public.

Ang kapakanan ng masa ay dapat laging unang itaguyod!

LPG Marketers Association, Inc.
LPG Refillers Association of the Philippines, Inc.

Erap asked: Do you want US operation?

By Armand N. Nocum

SO WHAT'S it gonna be, Erap?

The Sandiganbayan has asked ousted President Joseph Estrada to make a categorical statement on whether he still wants to go to the United States for knee surgery, saying his recent pronouncements to the contrary were confusing the court.

In yesterday's hearing on Estrada's motion to travel for medical reasons, the Sandiganbayan's Special Division hearing his plunder trial directed Estrada's lawyers to set the record straight, noting that the lawyers and their client appeared to contradict each other.

"The motion is personal to him but we would like to know if he is still interested [in going abroad]," Presiding Justice Minita-Nazario told Estrada's court-appointed lawyers.

Justices Edilberto Sandoval and Teresita Leonardo de Castro joined Nazario in issuing an order for the lawyers to "submit a for-

mal stand" on the question.

Nazario noted Estrada's "persistent pronouncements" in the media that he no longer wanted to undergo knee surgery in the US following the declaration by his friend, actor Fernando Poe Jr., that he was running for President next year.

"It's in the papers. He [Estrada] has been very categorical about it, that he fears he might not be allowed to return," Sandoval said.

Lawyers Manuel Pamaran, Jose Flaminiano, Noel Malaya and Irene Jurado promised to comply with the court's order and submit Estrada's statement within five days.

Also yesterday, the special division ruled as "submitted for resolution" the defense motion seeking permission not to present evidence in Estrada's behalf because the prosecution's evidence was "weak."

The ruling came after the office of the Special Prosecutor failed to oppose the motion.

"That was a big blunder on their part," remarked Flaminiano after the hearing.

Lifestyle check drive now like 'fishing from an aquarium'

By Armand N. Nocum

CALL it sheer luck.

Only 10 months into the lifestyle check campaign, graft investigators say it feels like "fishing from an aquarium." The reason: to escape the heat, government officials being probed for unexplained wealth have started telling on colleagues.

The job has suddenly become easy, according to a middle-level prober, an officer of the Lifestyle Check Coalition. "Although of course we are not falling for all of (the information)," he said.

The development is most pronounced at the Department of Public Works and Highways, one of the top three government agencies picked for the ongoing investigation, the officer noted.

He explained: "The common reaction of a DPWH official under investigation is, 'Why pick me? I'm just a small fry. Undersecretary so-and-so has a P25-million house in Metro and this regional director has a five-story hotel in Tarlac.'"

In some cases, the officer said, the one being probed even has a list. "And they can be very precise," he said. "Some say they have actually gone to this other director's three-swimming pool resort."

Another prober said the lifestyle check team sometimes received in-

formation even from officials who were not being investigated.

"This is a case of inter-office politics," he said. "They tell on colleagues either out of envy, or they are after the posts. Some are getting back at bosses who have left them out of SOPs (special operation projects) or commissions from contractors."

The second source likened the situation to certain police officials scrambling for "jueteng-rich" regions at the height of the illegal numbers game.

He said the same was now happening at the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs, the two other top targets of the lifestyle check drive.

Both anti-graft officers said the LCC was carefully screening all information given either verbally or via anonymous letters to the Transparency Group office in Malacañang.

Teresita Baltazar of the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission confirmed that government employees were now starting to tell on their bosses.

She said the Philippine Government Employees Association (PGEA) under Espy Ocampo recently offered to contribute to the "case build-up" against corrupt officials and workers in all government agencies.

Datumanong orders review of rebellion charges vs Misuari

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE Secretary Simeon Datumanong ordered the reinvestigation of the rebellion charges against Nur Misuari because the former ARMM governor had been deprived of "the full measure" of his right to due process.

"In this case, the accused have been unable to submit their counter-affidavits and present evidence for the simple reason that their witnesses are in Mindanao, and a great cost in terms of time and money will be needed for them to present such witnesses and evidence here in Metro Manila or in Calamba, Laguna," said Datumanong.

Misuari and six others are facing rebellion charges before Calamba Regional Trial Court Judge Norberto Y. Galdes.

They were allegedly behind the attacks by about 600 Misuari supporters on military outposts and a police station in Jolo, Sulu, on Nov. 19, 2001 in which over 100 people were killed. The Misuari supporters had hoped to stop the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) elections from taking place in order to keep Misuari in power longer.

In his three-page resolution, Datumanong ordered a preliminary investigation to be conducted in Zamboanga City "as soon as possible."

"Under the circumstances, we are

inclined to believe that the accused have been deprived of the full measure of (their right) to due process," he said.

Datumanong downplayed fears his decision could lead to Misuari's release this month. He said this was up to the courts to decide.

Misuari, the former leader of the Moro National Liberation Front, is being held at Fort St.

Domingo in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

His lawyers had initially asked the DOJ to reinvestigate the case but this was turned down in January by then acting Justice Secretary Ma. Mercedes Gutierrez. The lawyers appealed to Datumanong when he took over as DOJ secretary.

The lawyers said their client's rights were violated because the DOJ filed the case without getting their counter-affidavits. But records showed they had refused to submit counter-affidavits, saying the preliminary investigation should have been held in Sulu since the crime charged was committed there.

They also complained that they had been given only 10 days to submit their counter-affidavits when their witnesses were all in Mindanao.

After the November 2001 uprising, which lasted for days, Misuari fled to Malaysia where local authorities arrested him on Nov. 24, 2001 as he arrived in Sabah by boat.



MISUARI: Due process

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17-year-old 'PNP chief' raps bickering

From page A1

announced the priorities of his whirlwind term: the drug menace, kidnapping, and the reported divisiveness in the PNP ranks.

A big agenda, admittedly. "But we have to deal with these problems so the PNP can effectively serve the public," Gutierrez told reporters in a chance interview at Camp Crame yesterday.

Kidnap gangs, he noted, scurried away businesses and dragged down the economy, while drug syndicates made big money destroying lives. He acknowledged the current concerted anti-crime effort among law enforcement agencies, but said it was imperative that this cooperation was sustained beyond next year's elections.

How was this going to happen, with the constant bickering within the ranks? he demanded.

"All officers should strictly follow the chain of command," Gutierrez stressed. "If they have any complaints, these should be aired through the proper channels."

Symbolic

And so starting Thursday, as the most powerful police officer in the Philippines, Gutierrez gets to issue orders straight from Ebdane's office—if only symbolically.

The young man who "overtook" the whole Philippine Military Class of 1971 for the top PNP seat—including former CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group) Director Eduardo Matillano, who demanded Ebdane's resignation last week—is, to put it simply, really young.

Gutierrez is a 17-year-old high school senior of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral School. He was chosen among 50 candidates this year as "Youth Chief PNP."

The annual program gives high school students the chance to learn about the PNP by appoint-



ANTONIO Paulo Gutierrez, 17, will take over as PNP chief for three days.
JOAN BONDOC

ing one of them to the top post, according to Insp. Eugene Orate of the Police Community Relations Group.

While Gutierrez knows that his stint is strictly ceremonial, he intends to make full use of the three days to drum up awareness among the youth of the need to join the collective effort against criminality.

Thumbs down

He gave two thumbs down to last week's episode at the PNP when several top officers, including Matillano, refused to leave their posts as required by the revamp ordered by Ebdane.

Matillano went farther by asking for Ebdane's head, citing widespread corruption under the latter's watch. Ebdane reacted by sacking Matillano as chief of the powerful CIDG. President Macapagal-Arroyo had to rush to Crame to preside over a reconciliatory meeting between the feuding officials.

Incidents like this did nothing for the force's credibility and the men's morale, the Youth Chief PNP said.

After his short tour of duty at Camp Crame, he starts work on his long-term plan, still with police service in mind: he would enroll at the Philippine National Police Academy, and become a real cop. Maybe a real PNP chief, too, someday.

Caloocan firemen ...

From page A1

firefighters tried to put out the fire, a young girl came running toward Nacario, pointing to a house where her two cousins were trapped.

"I ran to tell a firefighter that they [the two boys] were still inside," recounted 11-year-old Yvette Evangelista.

Carlos Carpio Jr., who was 6 then, and his brother Mark Ryan, 7, were left inside the house. Their parents and three older siblings had already left to salvage their belongings.

The boy's father, Carlos Sr., said he and his relatives had thought the boys had already come out of the house.

Nacario related that when he went inside, he found the two boys hugging each other, hiding under a wooden table, the top of which was already on fire.

Afraid of fireman

"It was very hot and there were a lot of smoke," Mark Ryan related in Filipino. The boy said he was afraid of the firefighter at first because he thought he was a policeman trying to arrest him and his brother.

But Nacario grabbed the kids. "As soon as we stepped out of the house, the roof gave way. It was like a scene from a movie," he said.

After the rescue, Nacario and his men put out the fire in the other homes half an hour after Patrol 117 received the call.

When Nacario and his men received their award yesterday, the two boys and their father were with them. "I'm so thankful for him for rescuing my children. I did not know that he was the chief," said the boys' father of Nacario.

Nacario said his men were simply doing their job. "Even if our equipment are not adequate and need replacement, our

fighting spirit is strong," he said with a big smile.

Search for heroes

The citation was one of the many awards given out during the Search for Heroes of Patrol 117 at the Manila Hotel, organized by the Manila Jaycees Inc. and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Among the other awards presented were the Outstanding Responder for Crime, Emergency and Fire Categories, Outstanding Operators, Outstanding Callers, and Best Responder for Crime and Emergency categories.

Philippine National Police Deputy Director General Edgardo Aglipay, anti-kidnapping czar Angelo Reyes, National Capital Region Police Office chief Ricardo de Leon, Interior Secretary Jose Lina, and Western Police District head Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong took turns in handing out the awards.

Other awardees included the Cebu Mobile Patrol of the Malaybalay Police Station (outstanding responder for crime outside the National capital Region), the Meycauayan, Valenzuela, and Mandaluyong Police Stations (outstanding responders for crime-NCR), the Valenzuela Fire Station (outstanding responder for fire), the NCR Fire District 1 (outstanding responder for medical emergency), and the Tuba Municipal Police Station (best responder for medical emergency).

Caller saved 15 lives

Alma Mondangis, who called Patrol 117 through her cellular phone to report that a bus had fallen into a ravine in Benguet was named Best Caller. Her call saved 15 lives.

The Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response (Pacer) earned the title of Best Responder for the neutralization of Faisal Marohombsar, who was killed in an encounter with Pacer opera-

tives in Cavite last year.

Those recognized as outstanding callers included Ruben Cabanlong, Gisela Libaton, Jessi Pangllinan and Dante Ulanimo.

PO1 Marisa Callwanagan and PO1 Evelyn Lagan were cited as outstanding operators.

Special awards were handed out to Bukidnon and Rizal as outstanding provincial orchestrator team (POT), while Pangasinan was named Best POT.

The outstanding POT members included Melba Bravo of Pangasinan and Emeterio Sumagang of Bukidnon. The best POT member was Efren Echavia.

Malaybalay best LGU

Malaybalay City was named the Best Local Government Unit.

Lucena, Mandaue, and Ormoc cities were named Best Advocacy Training, Organizing, Mobilizing, and Monitoring (Atommm) Teams outside the NCR. Their members—Ma. Luisa Echavia of Lucena, Veronica Fontanoza of Mandaue, and Police Insp. Gerardo Train of Ormoc—were named outstanding Atommm members.

Marikina City was cited as outstanding Atommm team for NCR, and its member Nilda Caoili was named top Atommm member.

"I will run out of time telling all the beautiful success stories of Patrol 117," said Lina, who began the program in 2001. "Our vision is that every city will be conscious to be a Good Samaritan and be aware that the government is just a phone call away and that it will respond to emergencies."

Lina said that some 7,000 successful responses had been made by authorities through Patrol 117.

"We have progressed so much in the past three years. There will be more progress in the days to come," he said.

SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Judgment in an ejectment suit—The basic issue before us is whether petitioner's members, who were not parties to the unlawful detainer case, may be ejected from the land subject of this case. We rule in the affirmative. It is well-settled that, although an ejectment suit is an action *in personam* wherein the judgment is binding only upon the parties properly impleaded and given an opportunity to be heard, the judgment becomes binding on anyone who has not been impleaded if he or she is: (a) a trespasser, squatter or agent of the defendant fraudulently occupying the property to frustrate the judgment; (b) a guest or occupant of the premises with the permission of the defendant; (c) a transferee pendente lite; (d) a sub-lessee; (e) a co-lessee or (f) a member of the family, relative or privy of the defendant. In the case at bar, the records show that petitioner's members are trespassers or squatters who do not have any right to occupy the property of respondent. Petitioner does not dispute the ownership of the parcels of land in question. In fact, it even admitted that the subject property is owned by Macaria Maglaqui, mother of private respondent. Petitioner failed to establish any right which would entitle its members to occupy the land in any capacity, whether as lessees, tenants and the like. Petitioner's only defense against the eviction and demolition orders is their supposed non-inclusion in the original detainer case. This defense, however, has no legal support since its members are trespassers or squatters who are bound by the judgment. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Corona, Third Division, Sunflower Neighborhood Association vs Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 136274, September 3, 2003]

By R. B. VERA

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PRESIDENT Macapagal confers on Cardinal Sin the Order of Lakandula.

VAL HANDUMON

'Prophet of our times' given Lakandula award

JAIME Cardinal Sin, hero.

The former Manila archbishop, who backed the Edsa I and Edsa II "people power" revolutions, was bestowed the Bayani Grand Cross of the Order of Lakandula yesterday in the presence of two presidents that he helped put into power.

In her testimony, President Macapagal-Arroyo called Sin the "prophet of our times" and "the Lord's instrument to show His hand in Edsa I and Edsa II."

She thanked the Cardinal for helping her through her "steepest trials"—the failed siege of Malacañang in May 2001, and the Oakwood mutiny last July 27.

The frail Sin said he did not deserve the recognition. "You did not have to do this. This decoration (goes) to the Lord, who uses

weak men like me to make His grace present in the world."

He reminded the President, who recently lifted the moratorium on the death penalty: "I pray that you will be true to your promise after Edsa Dos, that you will always be a loving and obedient daughter of the Holy Catholic Church."

Sin earlier urged Ms Macapagal to seek a fresh six-year term.

Present at the testimonial lunch were former President Corazon Aquino, Vice President Teofisto Guingona, Senate President Franklin Drilon, House Speaker Jose de Venecia, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, Bishop Fernando Capalla, El Shaddai's Mike Velarde and top officials of the Supreme Court and the Cabinet. *Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

NOTHING TO DO WITH SEX Buhain says he 'begged' Vatican to accept resignation

By Blanche S. Rivera

MANILA Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Buhain insisted yesterday his resignation had nothing to do with the sex and graft allegations made against him earlier.

Instead, he said, he had "begged" the Vatican to accept his resignation at the same time it allowed Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin to retire last August. It was Sin who appointed Buhain to the Manila archdiocese 20 years ago.

Buhain said the allegations of sexual and fiscal misconduct made against him by "unknown groups" had nothing to do either with the Vatican's acceptance of his resignation, which he had formally sought on Aug. 31, Cardinal Sin's 75th birthday.

In his letter to Pope John Paul II, Buhain said he felt that his term

as bishop of Manila was co-terminus with that of Cardinal Sin, and with Sin's retirement he was "begging for your Holiness' acceptance of my resignation and asking for your apostolic blessing."

He said Sin had cleared him of the allegation he had fathered a child with one of his parishioners after he presented proof. He said he was also cleared by auditors of the charge he had spent some P20 million during his term as president of Radio Veritas.

"There were never any charges; there were whispers. Cardinal Sin asked me to explain so I did....," said Buhain yesterday in an interview at his office beside the Quiapo church.

The 66-year-old Buhain, a bishop for 20 years, said it was the Church's decision not to conduct an inquiry despite his repeated requests for one in order

to present his side.

"So I asked His Eminence, since there was no investigation, [to] give me a certification saying I did not father a child," Buhain said. Sin issued the certification on Aug. 18.

In June, Buhain was able to secure an affidavit from the woman who bore the child saying the baby had been conceived by artificial insemination and she never had a romantic relationship with any clergy.

"The Holy See is painfully aware of circumstances which surrounded your resignation... With fraternal concern and affection, I recommend that you turn to the Lord so that He may assist you during this period of your life and throughout your retirement," said Cardinal Re, prefect of bishops in the Vatican, in his letter to Buhain dated Oct. 31.

*This time, it's
Bert who's
mad at Mike*

AFTER his tiff with Lakas spokesperson Heherzon Alvarez, newly designated political campaign spokesman Mike Defensor is now engaged in a new turf war, this time with Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo.

Yesterday, Romulo castigated Defensor for speaking on matters outside the latter's designated sphere, particularly changes in the Cabinet.

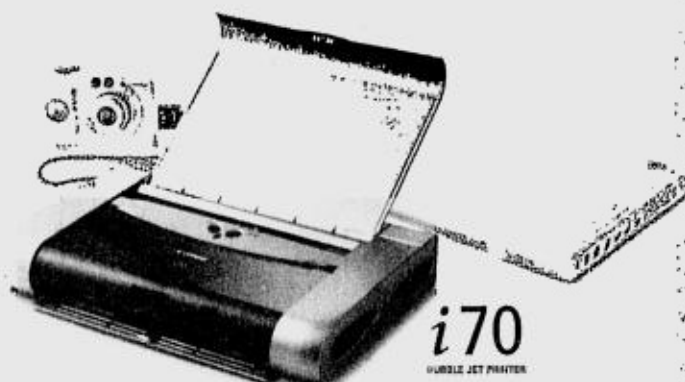
The Executive Secretary was peeved by Defensor's statement about the next secretaries of trade and industry and finance even though these changes were still under consideration by his office.

Romulo said he had asked Defensor to first check with his office before making any announcement on Cabinet matters. "I told him to check with us before he says anything about any Cabinet changes," Romulo said.

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RP a dangerous place for journalists, say media watchdogs

DESPITE having one of the freest presses in Asia, the Philippines has become dangerous for journalists, media watchdog groups say.

A record seven journalists have been assassinated in the country this

year, most of them broadcasters or newspaper reporters in the provinces gunned down for their hard-hitting political commentaries. It is the highest annual number of killings since 1986, when democracy was restored after 14 years of dicta-

torship, according to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), a local media watchdog group. "Forty-three journalists have been killed over the last 17 years but not one of the murders has been resolved with satisfaction, reflecting the culture of impunity that prevails in the Philippines," Melinda de Jesus, the center's executive director, told AFP.

"Perhaps it's because court cases for libel take a longer time than hiring an assassin," she said.

"But the real explanation why the killings persists is because there is no punishment—the killers disappear and people forget about the cases."

The latest to be killed was a radio broadcaster in Masbate City, shot five times last week while leaving his station by motorcycle after presenting his news programme.

"It's worrisome," said Sheila Coronel, the executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), which together with CMFR and other media groups, has set up a forum to address the attacks against journalists.

The Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists acts as a support group for distressed journalists and provides immediate assistance to the families of those killed in the line of duty.

Apparently dismayed by the adverse publicity received by the Philippines, tagged "the most dangerous place in the world for journalists" by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, President Mac-

pagal last week ordered police to get cracking on the unsolved murders.

She had offered a one-million-peso bounty for tips leading to the arrest of suspects of each murdered journalist in the past five years.

But despite that, no immediate progress has been made in the investigations, noted Paris-based press watchdog Reporters Without Borders.

Media groups in the Philippines and abroad have closed ranks over the killings and are using a landmark case in their crusade—the cold-blooded murder of a journalist in the country's troubled south.

Edgar Damalerio, a 32-year-old award-winning radio, TV and newspaper commentator known for his stinging exposés, was shot dead last year while driving his jeep after work along with two companions. The witnesses identified the prime suspect as a policeman, who was arrested but escaped police custody.

The Damalerio case would have marked the first time that anyone had been charged, detained and possibly punished for killing a journalist since 1961.

AFP

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RP a dangerous place for journalists, say media watchdogs

DESPITE having one of the freest presses in Asia, the Philippines has become dangerous for journalists, media watchdog groups say.

A record seven journalists have been assassinated in the country this

year, most of them broadcasters or newspaper reporters in the provinces gunned down for their hard-hitting political commentaries.

It is the highest annual number of killings since 1986, when democracy was restored after 14 years of dicta-

torship, according to the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR), a local media watch group.

"Forty-three journalists have been killed over the last 17 years but not one of the murders has been resolved with satisfaction, reflecting the culture of impunity that prevails in the Philippines," Melinda de Jesus, the center's executive director, told AFP.

"Perhaps it's because court cases for libel take a longer time than hiring an assassin," she said.

"But the real explanation why the killings persists is because there is no punishment—the killers disappear and people forget about the cases."

The latest to be killed was a radio broadcaster in Masbate City, shot five times last week while leaving his station by motorcycle after presenting his news programme.

"It's worrisome," said Sheila Coronel, the executive director of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), which together with CMFR and other media groups, has set up a forum to address the attacks against journalists.

The Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists acts as a support group for distressed journalists and provides immediate assistance to the families of those killed in the line of duty.

Apparently dismayed by the adverse publicity received by the Philippines, tagged "the most dangerous place in the world for journalists" by the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, President Maca-

pagal last week ordered police to get cracking on the unsolved murders.

She had offered a one-million-peso bounty for tips leading to the arrest of suspects of each murdered journalist in the past five years.

But despite that, no immediate progress has been made in the investigations, noted Paris-based press watchdog Reporters Without Borders.

Media groups in the Philippines and abroad have closed ranks over the killings and are using a landmark case in their crusade—the cold-blooded murder of a journalist in the country's troubled south.

Edgar Damalerio, a 32-year-old award-winning radio, TV and newspaper commentator known for his stinging exposés, was shot dead last year while driving his jeep after work along with two companions. The witnesses identified the prime suspect as a policeman, who was arrested but escaped police custody.

The Damalerio case would have marked the first time that anyone had been charged, detained and possibly punished for killing a journalist since 1961.

AFP

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GMA declares Christmas ceasefire with Reds

From page A1

In a statement, the President said the suspension of offensive military operations (Somo) against the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), NPA and the National Democratic Front (NDF) would take effect from the first hour of Dec. 10 up to midnight of Jan. 6, 2004.

"The Somo is aimed at further opening the door toward meaningful peace negotiations with the NDF. I am firmly committed to a principled pursuit of peace and the resolution of conflict through non-violent means," she said.

Army officials reported that two rebels were killed and three of their comrades were captured in an encounter with soldiers near T'boli town in South Cotabato.

A woman rebel was shot dead and another guerrilla was arrested in a separate clash near Castilla, Sorsogon.

Ms. Macapagal directed Gen. Narciso Abaya, Armed Forces chief of staff, to draw up the guidelines for soldiers during the ceasefire implementation to ensure their compliance and continued defense of vital government installations.

The government had traditionally observed such Christmas truces in the past, which the NPA often reciprocated. The 9,000-member NPA has been waging an armed guerrilla campaign since 1969.

NDF statement

Earlier, the communist-led NDF announced that it was willing to declare a 15-day cessation of armed hostilities if the government would issue a "reciprocal" order to its military, police, paramilitary and "irregular" forces.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, the NDF National Council said it would be handing down a ceasefire order to all NPA commands and units, as well as "people's militias," which would take effect from Dec. 20 to Jan. 4.

Luis Jalandoni, NDF peace negotiating panel chair, authenticated the statement.

At a briefing in Malacañang, Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita noted that a ceasefire with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front had been in effect since July 19 when the Moro rebels and government officials sat down to start talks in drafting a final peace agreement.

AFP spokesperson Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia said the formal peace talks, which were scheduled as early as August, would finally push through by the first week of January.

A six-member, third party monitoring team from Malaysia was scheduled to arrive on Dec. 15 and stay in Mindanao for eight days to start the groundwork for the peace talks in Malaysia, Garcia said.

No pressure

The ceasefire "is all in the spirit of the Christmas season," Garcia, who is also the AFP vice chief of staff, said in a phone interview. "We just want peace to reign in our midst during this period."

"The government will not declare a ceasefire because of pressure from any group. We will declare [it] based on our assessment of the need for [it]," Garcia said.

According to the NDF statement, "all commands and units of the NPA and the people's militia shall be in defensive mode [during the ceasefire period] and would remain vigilant against any encroachment on the supposed territory of the revolutionary forces."

However, it said, "the appropriate NPA command can decide to carry out offensive actions in order to defeat and frustrate a prior or impending enemy attack, pursue the enemy attackers or punish them and their cohorts."

The NDF said it issued the order on "humanitarian grounds" and as an "act of goodwill in order to allow the commands, units and personnel of the contending armies to observe the traditional holidays and enjoy the spirit of the holidays."

Military and police officers and members who have "no serious liability" would not be arrested and punished, it said. "They may be allowed individually to enter the territory of the people's government for personal visits to relatives and friends."

Encounters

In Sorsogon, Army soldiers killed a woman rebel and capture one of her comrades in an encounter in Sitio Buladbud in Barangay Libtong, Castilla, on Sunday.

Col. Ramon Santos, head of the Army's 901st Infantry Brigade stationed in Daraga, Albay, identified the fatality as Susan Aringo and the captured rebel as Efren Bien.

Two .38 cal. revolvers, assorted ammunition, and a backpack containing anti-government documents were recovered from the scene of the battle.

Maj. Gen. John Bolhayon, head of the Army's 9th Infantry Division, said the soldiers fought a five-member NPA unit led by Eleuterio Mangampo, alias Ka Bonso, for five minutes. The rebels fled toward Barangay San Isidro, also in Castilla.

In Camarines Sur, six suspected members of an NPA liquidation unit were captured in Pasacao town on Thursday by soldiers on surveillance operations.

In a statement, Maj. Jose Broso, local Army spokesperson, identified the suspects as Noemi and Reynante Redima, and Allan Marinas, all of Barangay Combra; Patrick Janos Isaac, of Barangay Tinalmud; Diego Gravito, of Barangay Dalupaon; and Jo Lazarte, of Barangay Caranan. *With reports from TJ Burgonio, Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and AFP*

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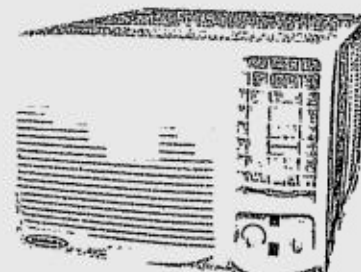
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GUILTY OF CORRUPTION

Ex-Nicaraguan president draws 20 years in prison

MANAGUA—Former Nicaraguan president Arnoldo Aleman was sentenced Sunday to 20 years in prison on a series of corruption charges, the judge in charge of the case announced here.

"Dr. Arnoldo Aleman is sentenced to 20 years in prison for crimes of laundering of money from illegal activities, misappropriation of public funds, fraud, association to commit crimes and electoral crimes," Judge Juana Mendez said, reading the sentence in court Sunday.

She also slapped Aleman, president from 1997 to 2002, with a fine "worth twice the assets at issue in this trial," and barred him from taking public office during the period of his sentence.

But Aleman, who is morbidly obese, will for the time being remain under house arrest, the



ALEMAN

judge ruled.

Mendez herself released Aleman, 57, from prison in late November and put him under house arrest at his posh El Chile ranch south of the capital on health grounds. She said stress and other medical conditions, including diabetes and hypertension, could trigger a heart attack.

Aleman's attorney Mauricio Martinez described the ruling as an

"aberration," arguing that the crime of money laundering "does not exist" on the books in Nicaragua. "We will overturn the ruling in the appeals court," he said.

Nicaraguan President Enrique Bolanos declined to comment on the sentence, saying he had not yet read it. But he noted the irony of it being handed down on the day Catholic Nicaragua was celebrating the purity of the Virgin Mary.

Scores of Aleman sympathizers hurled rocks and tried to break into the court house. Riot police used tear gas to disperse the crowd, but two officers were wounded in the scuffles.

The former president faces a separate lawsuit in which he is charged with embezzling \$1.3 million.

Before being imprisoned, Aleman had been under house arrest from December 2002 to August on accusations that he helped embezzle nearly 100 million dollars of govern-

ment funds during his presidency.

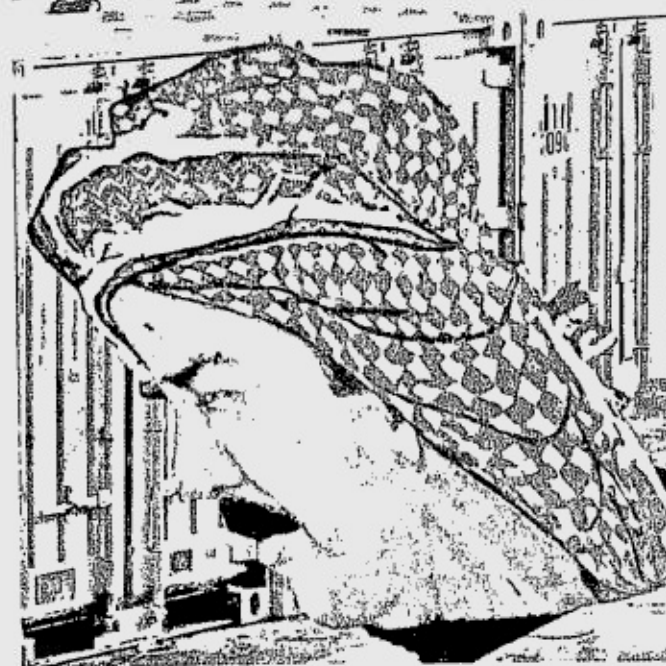
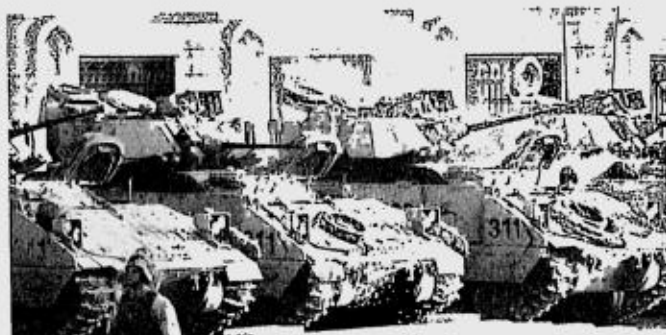
Aleman's personal fortune grew from an estimated \$50,000 in 1989 to around \$250 million in 2001, according to members of the Liberal Constitutionalist Party, which Aleman headed.

So far, investigations have implicated 40 other people, including members of Aleman's family and 16 of his former staffers.

During the nearly year-long trial Aleman refused to testify, claiming that the whole event was a smear aimed at weakening his party leadership orchestrated by his successor Bolanos.

Prosecutors however were able to document shady Aleman transactions abroad, including seven million dollars found in bank accounts of front operations and relatives in Panama.

Nicaragua is one of Latin America's poorest countries. **AFP**



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A PICTURE of toppled Iraqi President Saddam Hussein hangs at the 4th Infantry Division headquarters in Tikrit, 180 km north of Baghdad, on Dec. 7. US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld promised Iraqis that US troops would stay on until they have eliminated all vestiges of Saddam Hussein's regime. **AFP**

Saddam's fall will not halt attacks, says US general

BAGHDAD—Guerrillas killed a US soldier with a roadside bomb in northern Iraq on Sunday, and a US military commander said attacks might not abate even if American troops kill or capture Saddam Hussein.

A soldier from the US Army's 101st Airborne Division died and two others in his unit were injured when rebels detonated a bomb as a US military convoy drove through the center of Mosul at midday, M/Sgt. Kelly Tyler said.

"I heard an explosion and came running toward the site of the attack and saw three soldiers, one of them covered with blood," said Bahaa Hussein, a student. Mosul is 400 km north of Baghdad.

In the capital, Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said attacks could surge ahead of a July 1 deadline for a transfer of authority from the US-led coalition to a transitional Iraqi government.

"We expect to see an increase in violence as we move forward toward sovereignty at the end of June," Sanchez said.

"The killing or capturing of Saddam Hussein will have an impact on the level of violence, but it will not end it," he said. "It won't be the end-all solution."

"It's a needle in a haystack," he said of the hunt for Saddam. "Clearly we haven't found the right haystack... We are moving under the assumption that he is still in the country, that he is still operating."

After a daylong trip to Iraq on Saturday, US Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said he wants senior commanders in Iraq to consider whether the Pentagon underestimated how many US-trained Iraqi security forces would be needed before a sovereign Iraqi government takes over next summer.

Rumsfeld said he alone has raised doubts about whether the current goal of about 220,000 Iraqi security forces would be adequate, but he asked commanders to review their estimates. He was interviewed on the flight to Washington, arriving early Sunday after a weeklong trip that also included a stop in Afghanistan.

"I raised that question not because I have conviction that we need more, but because I worry that budgets will begin to get committed, and we may not know if we need more until sometime, for example, in February or March or April," he said. By then, he said, the money might not be available.

"I'm concerned that we might not have the option of increasing it, in fact, that proves to be necessary," he said.

The number of Iraqis now in uniform is now said to be about 140,000, many of whom were rushed through training programs. Rumsfeld sees the buildup of those forces as the key to completing the military mission there in the aftermath of Saddam's deposed dictatorship.

In Saddam's hometown of Tikrit on Sunday, children took a break from a soccer game to taunt US soldiers on patrol with chants of: "We will give our blood, we will give our lives for Saddam." **AP**

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US 'regrets' killing 9 Afghan kids, vows probe

KABUL—The US military voiced regret on Sunday for killing nine children in Afghanistan during a weekend air strike it said was meant to target a guerrilla commander.

The children were playing on Saturday in the walled compound of a house at Makur, 85 km southwest of the town of Ghazni, when the US A-10 aircraft attacked with gunfire.

A statement from US military spokesman Lt. Col. Bryan Hifferty regretted the loss of innocent life and said the "tragic incident" was being investigated.

The military said their bodies were found by troops of the US-led force near that of a "known terrorist."

The US ambassador identified the man as Mullah Wazir, a local figure who bragged of attacks on aid workers, but Afghan officials disputed the assertion Mullah Wazir was killed.

"It has not been ascertained if Mullah Wazir was killed or not, but the house was his," said Haji Assadullah, governor of Ghazni province.

Officials also said two Indians were abducted by suspected Taliban fighters in a southern province on Saturday, while two Turkish laborers detained by an Afghan chieftain over a land dispute were freed on Sunday, Turkish officials said.

Initially, authorities believed the Turks, taking part in a well-digging project, had been snatched by Taliban guerrillas or their allies when

they disappeared on Friday near the village of Khake Jabar, about 25 km east of Kabul.

The United Nations said it was "profoundly distressed" by the children's deaths, which it said could have a negative impact among Afghans in the troubled south.

It called for a swift investigation and for the results to be made public.

"This incident, which follows similar incidents, adds to a sense of insecurity and fear in the country," UN Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi said in a statement.

US-led forces have been pursuing remnants of the Taliban overthrown in late 2001 along with Islamic militant allies including members of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, blamed by Washington for the Sept. 11 attacks among others.

The US ambassador, Zalmay Khalilzad, said Mullah Wazir was "a known financier, organizer and facilitator of terrorist activity" involved in attacks on Afghans working on the Kabul-Kandahar highway and aid workers.

Hours after the strike, suspected Taliban guerrillas kidnapped two Indians working on a US-funded road in neighboring Zabul province.

Interior Minister Ali Ahmad Jalali said Taliban commander Mullah Roazi, responsible for kidnapping a Turkish road engineer in late October, had been in a village close to where the Indians were abducted, but he did not know if he was to blame. Reuters

Fly-borne skin disease dogs US troops in Iraq

BAGHDAD—The US Army's 101st Airborne Division has sent 20 soldiers to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for treatment for a skin disease transmitted by bites from

sand flies, the military said.

Another 10 to 20 soldiers from the 101st Airborne, based in Mosul in northern Iraq, are under observation for the illness, called leishmaniasis, said Maj. Trey

Cate, a division spokesperson.

About 150 US soldiers serving in Iraq have been diagnosed with leishmaniasis and more may have been infected with the disease, which can take months to incu-

bate, according to reports in USA Today and The New York Times.

The disease is known as "Baghdad Boil" to US soldiers in Iraq, and can leave disfiguring lesions on the skin for months. AP

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WINTER STORM

A woman walks her dog during a snowstorm in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, on Dec. 7. The winter storm, which blasted through the northeastern United States, is hitting the Canadian maritimes and dropping up to 50 cm of snow. REUTERS

WORLD BRIEFS

Putin's allies triumph in polls

MOSCOW—Russian President Vladimir Putin's parties triumphed in a parliamentary poll that early results Monday showed could leave liberal economic reformers out of the chamber for the first time in the post-Soviet era. The Communist Party also suffered heavy losses in Sunday's poll to the State Duma, or lower house of parliament, and its leader accused the Kremlin of rigging the vote and refused to accept its results. Meanwhile pro-Putin powers were approaching the two-thirds majority needed for the Kremlin chief to alter the constitution and perhaps extend his term in office for many more years to come. Preliminary results issued after 58 percent of the ballots had been counted gave Putin's United Russia party 36.5 percent of the vote. The Communists slipped into second place with 12.9 percent while in one of the day's biggest surprises the pro-Putin nationalist firebrand Vladimir Zhirinovskiy and his LDPR party stormed into third place with 12.5 percent. AFP

Palestinian truce talks collapse

CAIRO—Palestinian ceasefire talks ended in failure on Sunday as militant groups rejected a comprehensive truce seen as crucial to reviving a US-backed peace road map. "The meetings have ended without agreement. There will be no final joint communiqué," a senior official from the militant Islamic group Hamas said. Egypt had been pushing the 13 factions attending the talks to accept a comprehensive ceasefire that would involve halting attacks against all Israelis, but Hamas and four other factions said they would only stop attacks against civilians in Israel. "Our final response along with the four other factions is we are not ready to declare a new ceasefire," Hamas official Mohammed Nazzari said in Cairo. Israeli officials expressed disappointment at the breakdown of the talks, seen as key to underpinning the road map that sets out steps to end three years of Israeli-Palestinian violence and the establishment of a Palestinian state in 2005. Reuters

China's Wen warns Taiwan

NEW YORK—China's Premier Wen Jiabao, at the start of a four-day visit to the United States, said Beijing would never allow rival Taiwan to use aspirations for democracy as a cover for separatism. Wen, who visited UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in snow-swept New York before going to Washington, intends to seek assurances from the Bush administration that it will rein in Taiwan. He also will face criticism of China's trade and currency policies while promoting closer economic cooperation. Tensions have risen across the Taiwan strait since last month, when the island's parliament passed a law allowing referendums. Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian has backed off an independence vote but instead planned a referendum in March asking China to withdraw ballistic missiles aimed at the island. Reuters

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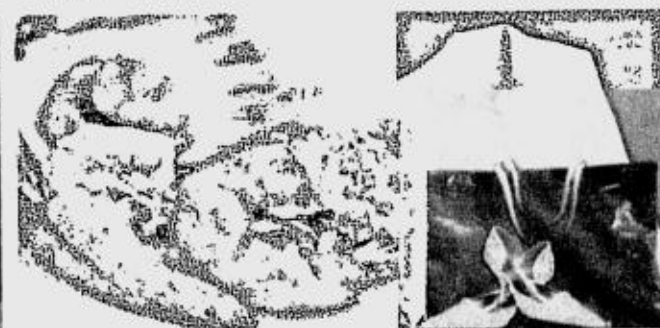
setting in the middle of the metropolis, this six-tower enclave achieves comfort and style through a balance of thoughtfully planned elements.

For urban professionals based in the nearby Makati and even Ortigas central business districts, Forbeswood Heights offers exquisite residences combined with first-rate recreational amenities.



From executive studios to one-bedroom suites that range from 36 to 59 square meters, Forbeswood Heights redefines the concept of owning a luxury home. Units can be joined to suit a client's space requirements. Rooms are airy and bright. The layout is luxurious yet uncomplicated. And with its affordable prices and flexible payment terms, one easily lays claim to an address and a lifestyle of exceptional prestige.

At Forbeswood Heights, today's urban pacesetters reward themselves with exclusive access to their own tropical paradise. This condominium project brings the outdoors indoors with its 5,500-square-meter central park, an extensive recreational area embraced by lush greenery. There is a swimming pool complex with a 25-meter-long lap pool, a free-form pool with in-water lounge and a children's wading pool with water slide. By the pool deck is an inviting sunbathing lounge.



A multipurpose hall with a barbecue pit hosts a variety of functions. A fitness station, jogging path, tennis court and putting green provide challenging workouts. A playground enfolded by palm trees and landscaped gardens allows children to frolic to their hearts' content.

Beyond the gates lies Forbes Town Road, a leisure strip that echoes Singapore's Bugis Junction. With rows of cafés, restaurants, bars and specialty shops a few paces away, everyday celebrations are just waiting to happen.

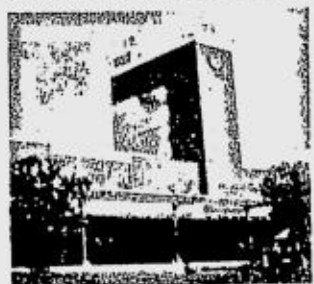


Forbeswood Heights lies within the Global City, a world-class business district, and is located right next to the country's foremost symbols of distinction: the Manila Golf and Country Club, the Manila Polo Club and the Forbes Park subdivision. This illustrious neighborhood, one of the city's main attractions, allows residents to live at the height of prominence.

Nearly half of the Global City's land is devoted to open space and greenery. Urban professionals, used to the

Well-situated amenities within the city such as PriceSmart and MC Home Depot make the daily essentials readily available to residents. The British School Manila, the Manila Japanese School and the International School Manila offer the youth a privileged education. The upcoming St. Luke's Medical Center brings expert health care closer to home.

With the Global City's mass transport system, efficient road network and state-of-the-art traffic services, key destinations become easily accessible. The Makati and Ortigas CBDs can be reached effortlessly via the EDSA Kalayaan Flyover, the South Luzon Expressway and the Circumferential Road (C-5).



...Nestled amid the best of a Global City

sight of skyscrapers and cramped roads, will find this place a refreshing change. Also dotting this city of green are striking works of public art created by top Filipino artists such as Gerry Leonardo and Lor Calma.

Much of the Global City's infrastructure has been laid underground. Its world-class dual piping, power and LPG supply and fiber optic cabling systems ensure the utmost convenience for its residents. Its drainage detention center, the largest private drainage structure in Metro Manila, guarantees that the city remains flood-free during the rainy season.



Transforming the Urban Landscape



Construction of the six-tower Forbeswood Heights kicked off with a concrete pouring ceremony attended by (from left) Bonifacio West Development Corporation director Kirk U. Young, president Charlie Rufino, vice chairman Jacques Dupasquier, Megaworld chair and president Andrew Tan, 19-1 Realty director Macario Rufino and Megaworld senior vice president Kingson Sian.

Forbeswood Heights has captured the imagination of urban professionals doing business or working in

Makati and Ortigas. With its tropical-paradise allure and the modern conveniences afforded by its vantage location in the Global City, touted as the next most important CBD, the project promises a superior standard of living for its residents. To date, Forbeswood Heights has joined Megaworld's portfolio of fast-selling projects, with the Agoho, Bauhinia, Cambridge and Dorchester towers already sold out and Evergreen 60 percent sold.

Joint venture partners Megaworld Corporation and Bonifacio West Development Corp. recently held a concrete pouring ceremony to mark the start of construction of the first and third towers (Agoho and Cambridge) of Forbeswood Heights. The two are scheduled for completion by 2006.

At the site bordering the Manila Golf and Country Club, an impressive three-story grand showroom offers visitors an intimate view of Forbeswood Heights and its community. Model units showcasing the best architectural and interior designs give clients a taste of



the sumptuous lifestyle offered only at Forbeswood Heights. The showroom also features a UCC Café at the ground level, a thoughtful addition for visitors who want to unwind after touring the model units. A few steps away, McDonald's, the anchor establishment of Forbes Town Road, caters to people on the go.

Forbeswood Heights is an address for people who want to enjoy the comforts of home from a luxurious garden retreat in the middle of a world-class city. It is a valuable investment—one that enables customers to own the whole of paradise and not just a piece of it.

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OPINION

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INQUIRER's 18th

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer, born in the last days of the Marcos regime, celebrates its 18th anniversary today. It has come a long way from its humble beginnings in 1985, when it was founded on a P1-million budget and enjoyed a circulation of 30,000 in its early days.

In the 18 years since its founding the INQUIRER has become the broadsheet with the biggest circulation in the country, with a weekday circulation of 200,000 and a Sunday circulation of 250,000. It enjoys a 52 percent share of the total circulation of all the broadsheets. It also has the biggest volume of display ads, accounting for 46 percent of the advertising pie.

The INQUIRER has risen from its position as one of the leaders of the alternative press of the Marcos regime to become one of the most influential dailies, if not the most influential daily, in the country today.

If the INQUIRER were a person, it would be young lady making her debut in society today. A young lady, now more refined, and yet still a brash, sassy and active lady, ready to fight in defense of freedom, democracy, social justice and human rights.

The fight of the INQUIRER, and indeed the fight of the press in the Philippines, is a continuing one. The Marcos dictatorship may have been toppled by the Edsa Revolution, but it always threatens to return, in another guise and in another form. Ferdinand E. Marcos may have died in 1989, but his spirit still lives. The spirit of corruption, greed, lust for power still lives, not least in the hearts of some politicians who want to regain positions of power and influence.

In December 1989 the Marcos forces mounted their strongest challenge against the newly restored democracy headed by then President Corason Aquino. The INQUIRER came out with a front-page editorial announcing its stand for freedom and democracy. The Aquino administration beat down the challenge and prevailed.

In 1998, movie actor Joseph Estrada won a landslide electoral victory. But only about two years later, his administration was already unraveling. The INQUIRER helped expose the rot, corruption and incompetence in the Estrada administration and thereby hastened its fall.

The fight against a corrupt and incompetent administration was not without its perils. Estrada, with the help of his officials, cronies and friends, mounted an ad boycott against the INQUIRER in an attempt to bring it down to its knees and make it toe the administration line. But it resisted the assault, won the fight and came out a stronger paper.

What are the weapons the INQUIRER is using in its continuing fight against the ills of contemporary society?

First, courage and independence. It is afraid of no one because it has no agenda except the good of the people. It has no vested political or economic interest to protect. It is engaged purely in the business of publishing an excellent paper.

Second, its news sense and inquiring mind. The INQUIRER has scored many scoops and published many investigative and advocacy reports that have exposed irregularities and proposed solutions to the problems of the country. It sets the news agenda not only for the print media but for all the mass media, including television, radio and the news websites.

Third, its strong opinion section. Its editorials are perhaps the most widely read and quoted of all editorials in Philippine newspapers. They influence decision-making in government and the private sector. Its columns present a wide range of opinions.

Fourth, its passion to fight for what is right and for what will benefit the great mass of the people.

In short, what the INQUIRER brings into the fight against the ills of society is its culture of editorial excellence. Proof of editorial excellence is the fact that the INQUIRER has won, to date, a total of 189 prizes, awards and citations, including four awards from the Society of Publishers in Asia and one award from Society of News Design, Syracuse University.

The INQUIRER is not one to rest on its laurels. In doing its work of disseminating the truth, it will continue to strive for excellence. It will continue to be as accurate, as fair and as objective as possible in reporting the news. It will always try to adhere to the highest ethical principles of journalism. It will continue to be fearless and courageous in commenting on public issues.

Millions of readers in the past 18 years have put their trust in the INQUIRER. The INQUIRER enjoys the highest level of credibility of any newspaper in the country today. The INQUIRER can do no less to continue deserving that trust than to always uphold the highest standards of the newspaper profession and to always be loyal to the truth and to its readers.



Decide pending Comelec poll cases now

IT IS less than six months to the elections of May 10, 2004 but the Commission on Elections has not yet disposed of a number of pending election cases. These are cases for disqualification against candidates in the 2001 elections yet. The candidates complained of have been proclaimed and are serving the terms of office and collecting the salaries and allowances of the persons entitled to the positions. Since then, investigators have found out that the complaints were meritorious and have recommended to the Comelec the nullification of the proclamation of the candidates. In other words, the officials are not qualified to the positions. But the Comelec, until now, is sitting on these recommendations.

The terms of office of these officials are ending in a few months. If not acted upon before then, the findings and recommendations will become moot and the offending officials will have gotten away with their offenses. The persons rightfully entitled to the positions will have been denied their rights. What's more, the officials illegally occupying the positions may run again for the same position to which they are not qualified. Here are a few such cases:

1. Recently, the Supreme Court decided a case against Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy. It ordered the Comelec to nullify the proclamation of Dy. But the Comelec has not acted on it and new elections are almost here.

This is how it happened: Before the 2001 elections, a disqualification case was filed against gubernatorial candidate Noli Siquian for being a "nuisance candidate". Siquian contested the case but the Comelec disqualified him.

He appealed to the Supreme Court which ordered the Comelec not to canvass the votes and not to proclaim any winner until further orders from the Court. However, the Comelec had already proclaimed Dy by the time the Supreme Court order was promulgated. Dy has been serving as governor since then.

Recently, the Supreme Court came out with

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz



a final and executory order reiterating its first order. What is the Comelec going to do now?

2. Another disqualification case has been filed against Surigao Gov. Robert Lyndon Barbers, son of the senator. The complainant alleged that Robert Lyndon is not a Filipino but an American citizen and therefore not qualified to run for public office. He presented as evidence documents from the US and from the Philippine immigration bureau, among them that Barbers was using an American passport.

Robert Lyndon denied the allegations, said he is carrying a Philippine passport. It is possible he has both a Philippine and an American passport and with the new dual citizenship law, that is now allowed. But can he run for public office?

No, because the Constitution provides that only "natural born" Filipino citizens can run for public office. Naturalized Filipinos are not qualified; neither, it is presumed, are dual citizens.

Anyway, the Comelec should decide his case now one way or the other.

Robert Lyndon may file his certificate of candidacy in a few days but his citizenship and qualification are still hanging. They will surely be issues again in the coming elections.

3. A third disqualification case is pending against Manila Mayor Jose Atienza who will surely run for reelection and most likely win again. The case was filed before the May 14, 2001 elections by Amado M. Tetangco. Mayoral candidates Alfredo S. Lim and Amado S. Bagatsing later joined the case as intervenors. Atienza was accused of holding meetings

with barangay officials, the youth, local officials and members of the media in five different places at five different times between Feb. 19, 2001 and March 29, 2001, spending millions of pesos of public funds.

In his answer of April 20, 2001, Atienza "admitted having carried out the said parties and gave dole-outs at the city's expense but interposed the defense that they were done as part of his governance as Mayor and not for election purposes."

On May 17, 2001, intervenors Lim and Bagatsing filed their petition to intervene with prayer to suspend proclamation. The Comelec granted the petition to intervene but refused to suspend proclamation. Commissioner Rufino Javier directed that "disqualification should be set for hearing immediately."

Hearings were held in the regional level and on Jan. 29, 2002, Directors Ferdinand T. Rafanan and Esmeralda A. Ladra ruled that the meetings were held between Feb. 19, 2001 and March 29, 2001 and were "premature campaign activities" as the campaign period for local candidates was from March 31, 2001 to May 12, 2001.

Vote buying and the use of public funds for campaign activities are violations of the Omnibus Election Code that warrants "disqualification and annulment of proclamation".

Therefore the NCR Regional Director recommended to the Comelec that Atienza's proclamation as winning candidate "be nullified and he is disqualified from continuing to hold office." The case was elevated to the Commission on Jan. 29, 2002 as SPA 02-001. However, until today the Comelec has not acted on the recommendation.

Last Dec. 1, the Garayblas and de la Cruz law offices filed a motion with the Comelec for the immediate approval of the recommendation to disqualify Atienza.

In six months, the "ruling will become academic," the petition said. So Comelec, wake up!

Jokes

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



Jaworski did not think twice. He threw in his lot with his father-in-law. Jaworski of course later made noises about the national interest in doing so. But he acknowledged his father-in-law had much to do with his decision. As did Revilla, who said he prevailed upon his son-in-law to do the right thing.

The really astounding part of this business is not that politicians find it the easiest thing to say these things. It is that the public finds it the easiest thing to accept these things. The first is a function of the second. Politicians find it the easiest thing to say these things because the public finds it the easiest thing to accept these things. These utterances take on the aspect of something perfectly reasonable. They take on the aspect of something anyone in their position would do. You too will not go against your father-in-law even if you have to vote against your political allies. You too will pay a debt of gratitude to someone even if you have to split from your political allies. For most Filipinos, that is the honorable thing to do.

No one rose to protest Jaworski's decision then, not even his friends in the opposition. No one will rise today to protest Hagedorn's decision, not even Erap and FPJ. In fact, Hagedorn probably made that decision knowing Erap and FPJ would understand his reason for it, it is the same reason—pakikisama—they became *compadres*. After a brief period of *tampo*, they will all be friends again.

Everyone talks of ending, or at least doing something about, the "politics of personality." Even Erap, who will be remembered for his famous battle cry against nepotism: "Walang kama-kamaganak, walang kai-kaibigan" (no rela-

tives, no friends). But I don't know how well everyone appreciates the awesome dimensions of the "politics of personality." It's far more pervasive than we think. It's far more ingrained in us than we think.

Nothing suggests it more than that a group like Nandy Pacheco's Kapatiran is the exception rather than the rule in this country. No, it is more than an exception, it is a grotesquerie, a caricature, a batty fringe group that has no place in national life. Its members are only one notch higher than what the Comelec has been pleased to call "nuisance candidates." It is so because Kapatiran is a would-be political party that wants the basis of unity to be a set of principles and not a set of friends, conviction and not convenience, beliefs and not gratuitous alliances.

Media ignore it or scoff at it—I saw an item on it last week buried in the inside pages, an item not unlike the "oddities" we put out in the front page to give comic relief—as do all "serious" individuals and groups. To this day, it's everything Pacheco can do to recruit stalwarts to his group, one of his most formidable disincentives being his staunch opposition to the "pork barrel." Members of Kapatiran pledge to fight, or eschew, the "pork barrel," the one thing all, or nearly all, congressional aspirants aspire for.

Nobody finds this strange at all. In the land of the mad, the sane is insane. In the Wonderland of Alice, the rational is irrational. To see how strange all this is, we need only compare ourselves not just to the Western countries but to our Southeast Asian neighbors. Southeast Asia is a region where personal relations count for a great deal, but in most of the countries there parties like Kapatiran are the rule and those like Lakas and NPC are the exception. Parties that stand for something are the rule and those that stand only by the grace of God and greed are the exception.

That's why they get ahead and we only get, well, the word is not used in respectable company. They take their politics seriously, we take it as a text joke.

When nobody was looking

MANY developments have taken place over the past month, such as the failed impeachment of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and the heating up of the election fever, that virtually eclipsed the blatant dismissal by Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Teresa Yadao of the Kuratong Baleleng case involving Sen. Panfilo Lacson and 33 other officers and men of the defunct PAOCTF. After Yadao was ordered by the Supreme Court months ago to "proceed with dispatch" to reopen the KB case, her task was to determine probable cause for the multiple murder charges against Lacson and his co-accused. Under the Rules of Court, if a judge doubts the existence of probable cause, he can ask for more evidence. But Yadao did no such thing. She simply dismissed the case for lack of evidence despite four new affidavits executed by four police officers in 2001.

As acting Justice Secretary Jose Calida, the official spokesperson of the prosecution group, told this columnist recently, the judge ignored the four new affidavits submitted by the state prosecutors in their motion for reconsideration. These supported the charge of the 11 KB suspects were rubbed out so that the accused police officials could allegedly pocket a bank-robbery loot amounting to \$2 million and P25 million. Not only that, Calida stressed that Yadao also went into a determination of credibility, pointing out that some witnesses killings had allegedly recanted their testimony in the original trial, when the proper time to do this is in the trial itself. Calida said Yadao ignored the fact that the recantation was made under duress during the incumbency of Lacson's boss, then President Joseph Estrada.

The summary dismissal of the KB case was a shameful travesty of justice for the relatives of the KB victims, whom the government regards as victims of a rubout. The Department of Justice has filed two motions against Yadao: an administrative case for gross ignorance of the law, before the Office of Court Administrator Presbitero Velasco, and a motion to inhibit, filed right in her sala on

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan



account of her patent bias for the accused. The state prosecutors are also seeking her preventive suspension as an ancillary remedy.

When Yadao "inherited" the KB case from Judge Wenceslao Aguir, many people expressed fears about her lack of impartiality, considering her close ties to certain personalities identified with Erap. But frankly, I thought she would have been subtler in showing her bias, but even before the prosecutors could make their moves, she already said she'd stick to her decision. Her defiance of public opinion and the rules of court is shocking.

A friend of mine just came back from her farm in Region VIII and she reported that actor Fernando Poe Jr. has got the folks in the hinterlands excited over his candidacy. My friend rides taxis in Metro Manila quite often and she reports that the sentiment of many cab drivers is that they don't want another actor anymore. But in the hinterlands, there seems to be a different story. There are barangay officials who tell their mayors to leave them alone in their choice of FPJ. By the way, there are reports that mobile vans are being prepared to show old films of FPJ in the provinces during the Christmas holidays. This costs a lot of money, and many wonder who's financing it.

Last Sunday evening on the dzRH Radyo Balintawak program, Cecile Guidote Alvarez and I had as our guest Norberto A. Viera, president and general manager of the Baguio City-based Philippine office of the multinational firm, Texas Instruments. The firm manufactures digital signal instruments for cell phones worldwide as well as

control systems for cars, air conditioning, etc. and employs 2,000 workers. Viera is also the president of the Semiconductor and Electronics Industries in the Philippines Inc. (Seipi). He said that the local electronics industry is the engine of Philippine exports, accounting for 68 percent of exports valued at over \$26 billion yearly. It also employs about 400,000 people. But Viera said that this is just a drop in the worldwide electronics industry valued at \$3 trillion. The Philippines has the potential to manufacture \$100 billion worth of electronics. He noted that Singapore, a known center for the electronics industry in Asia, suffers from lack of skilled manpower, whereas the Philippines has no such problem. In fact the head office in Dallas of Texas Instruments has already pirated over 100 Filipinos over the years. But one of the problems of electronic firms here is the high cost of power, which is second in the region next only to Japan.

By now the story of how Texas Instruments pulled itself up from the rubble of the killer earthquake in 1991 is the stuff of legend. Viera said Baguio is called in TI offices around the world the "miracle mountain." This is because TI Philippines was written off just after the quake, but in about three weeks it was shipping products again.

The 47-year old Viera's life story is also the stuff of legend. The son of a poor farmer from Ajuy, Iloilo, he is the youngest in a huge family of 11 girls and one boy. He was able to finish engineering at UST only through the help of two older sisters: Alicia, a dress maker, and Lilia, who ran a small beauty parlor. Viera recalls how he would buy beauty products and seamstress' needs on his way home from school for his sisters. Prior to his appointment as TI Philippines chief, he was operations manager supervising a multinational staff, mainly composed of Americans. Now the head office wants him to work there, but he refuses to leave the country. Asked what was his message for our youth, Viera stressed that his success is "99 percent perspiration." There is no other formula but hard work, he said.

Doomsday

MY God, we're doomed!

That was my initial reaction when I read that Fernando Poe Jr. was running in 2004. Owing to his immense popularity, this actor touted as the "King of Philippine Movies" has a very strong chance of winning in next year's polls. There is no doubt about that, considering that this star-struck nation has for millions of voters who prefer popularity to credibility.

I must say that FPJ's credibility as a person is admirable. In his many years in show biz, never did he get entangled in any controversy or scandal. His marriage to actress Susan Roces has remained strong over time, unlike the typical showbiz marriage that results in a quick separation. Unlike his bosom buddy, ousted President Joseph Estrada, Poe has never been known as a womanizer. His moral ascendancy as a leader, therefore, cannot be questioned. He is a man of integrity.

His leadership, particularly his capacity to govern the country, is another story. Poe has no experience at all in the field of politics. Unlike Erap, who patiently worked his way up the political ladder from mayor to President, FPJ never put in a day of public service. Putting him straight up at the highest post in the land is downright scary.

My initial uneasiness over his candidacy was partly eased when as I read about the first interview he gave after announcing his presidential bid. I admit he made some good points. He said he would not be just a president for the poor like President Estrada, but he would be a president for all. He would help the rich because, according to him, jobs for the poor would come from them. I was quite impressed by that. It made me believe the guy knew something after all. He was saying that he was aware of the pivotal role the business sector played in our economy. And he veered away from attacking the elite and making a pretentious display of sympathy for the masses, which were the trademark of his disgraced friend.

FPJ also stressed that he was not beholden to anybody and that he was not corrupt. Good point. He was candid enough to admit that when people come to offer their support, he was not inclined to question their motives. All he wanted was to ensure that everything would be for the good of the country.

I was skeptical about that, since I have heard similar promises being made before, promises that were never fulfilled. This is expected of almost every politician, if not all.

Everything seemed so nice in print that I softened a bit toward the guy. But when I saw him being interviewed on TV, I was left gaping, not in awe but in total disappointment.

Yes, he spoke better English than Estrada, but he could hardly make himself understood. Many times that afternoon, my eyebrows met as I tried to hang on to every word he was saying. But he was practically mumbling, and I was blown away—for the wrong reasons.

I could not imagine how he would deliver speeches if he won. How would he address the Filipino people, in his State of the Nation Address, for instance? How would he speak to the leaders of different nations. I could only shake my head as I tried to imagine him at the Apec Summit. How could I ever be proud of him as our president?

Oh sure, his avid irrational supporters would be quick to defend their hero. They would present their redundant and tiresome argument that nothing good ever happened while the government was in the hands of educated leaders. But they seem to have forgotten what happened during Estrada's short-lived term.

They are blinded as ever and have unfortunately been led astray. They don't understand how the economy works. They believe, or rather, were made to believe, that politicians who give dole-outs are sympathetic to their destitution. I hope they will wake up and realize that the solution to widespread poverty should be long-term, not just a measly bag of rice and cheap canned goods that could be consumed in less than a week.

Showbiz people are in a similar mood right now, complaining about the criticisms FPJ has been receiving. Such a display of loyalty is befuddling. I'm not sure if it's because they truly believe in the guy, that he can rise up to the challenge, or if they simply relate to him as a showbiz personality.

And then comes Poe's faithful wife, making the ultimate defense, complete with tears that could earn her a best actress trophy, that her husband is sincere in wanting to serve the country. But that's not all that counts. This is no movie where her husband can get away with playing any character. This is for real!

My biggest disappointment so far is Poe's refusal to bare his political platform. Did he not have anything in mind? What does he propose to do with the problems facing the country? After months of extensive consultations, after months of weighing his options, after months of thinking over whether to run or not, did Poe not come up with anything? Does he not have a vision for the country?

Probably his "scriptwriters" have not yet come up with the perfect screenplay. So, Poe decided to seek the presidency simply because "the clamor was there," as he has repeatedly stressed. And then what?

The man is counting on his advisers. It is evident that FPJ knows absolutely nothing about governing the country. At the rate he is going, he would end up as a mere figurehead in Malacañang, with his legions of counselors actually running the show. Sounds familiar. Déjà vu—minus the regular drinking sprees and the womanizing.

The fact that Poe has not given us a blueprint of his economic policies clearly suggests that we cannot expect anything from him. Sure he did not make any promises, he did not make us to cling to false hopes. But why? So we could not blame him for not fulfilling them?

A great leader should be firm and decisive. He should have the guts to tell the people which way we're heading and then stick to his word. FPJ is asking the people to vote for him on the basis of his sincerity. He is asking us to put our complete trust in him. He is telling us to sign a contract whose terms have not even been written yet.

I hope the electorate would finally mature and make an informed choice in 2004. I hope our people will not sign that blank contract which would collectively bind the whole nation for six years to terms and conditions that will be disclosed later. I hope. Otherwise, we're doomed.

Armel D. Madsen, 26, is a certified public accountant and works as a senior auditor in a telecommunications company.

GMA the worst candidate?

SOME clarifications regarding the column on the "Gender Justice Awards," which seeks to recognize judges who have rendered outstanding decisions in cases involving Violence against Women.

First, one of the co-sponsors of the Awards is the Unifem East and Southeast Asia Regional Office based in Bangkok, not the Asia-Pacific Regional Office as I stated.

Second, the Supreme Court and its Committee on the Gender-Responsiveness of the Judiciary is NOT a partner of the organizing committee, which is composed mainly of women's NGOs. I understand that this is out of a sense of delicadeza as some of the cases decided on by the nominees or winners may come up to the Supreme Court for review or on appeal.

Still, even if the Supreme Court is not directly involved in the Gender Justice Awards, it's still heartening to note that gender sensitivity has become an area of concern for the judiciary. Gender issues and their impact on women's status in the law and within the criminal justice system, I understand, are an important part of the curriculum of the Judicial Academy, which seeks to update and enrich the knowledge of our judges and justices.

An indication of the Supreme Court's commitment to gender equality is the presence (as announced) of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. as one of the speakers in yesterday's launch of the Gender Justice Awards, on the theme: "Men Speak Out against Violence against Women."

The "Chief's" presence at the event would speak volumes about the validity and gravity of these issues. As it's been said: If men are half of the problem, then they should be half of the solution!

VOTERS base their choice among the presidential candidates on several factors: charisma, popularity, personality, and even the candidate's stand on particular issues.

Until recently, a candidate's stand on reproductive health, especially whether couples would be free to choose their method of family planning, hardly figured in voters' judgments.

But this government's population policy as enunciated by the President and her alter ego, her health secretary, has increasingly annoyed

AT LARGE



Rina Jimenez-David

and alarmed a growing number of people, including business leaders and leaders of other religious groups, hardly the types one would classify as rabid feminists or sexually irresponsible deviants.

For these voters, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's reproductive health policies (a term she abhors, by the way) present a clear and present danger not just to the health of women, men and children, but also to national security and stability. Not helping any are her and Secretary Dayrit's malicious and snide potshots at couples who dare enjoy sex without any intent of reproducing, or at advocates who believe in responsible but free sexuality.

UNDERSTANDABLE, then is the pique of member-organizations of the Reproductive Health Advocacy Network or RHAN who have declared that "GMA's total apathy to reproductive healthcare makes her the worst presidential pick for 2004."

The network cites the DOH's own statistics which state that around 7 million Filipino women of reproductive age are considered high risk for pregnancy. Out of these 7 million women, at least 2.6 million are expected to become pregnant each year, despite the risk to their lives.

"In fact, the death toll (maternal mortality rate) is pegged at three to four thousand women a year. Likewise, there are approximately 400,000 unsafe (clandestine) abortions in the Philippines every year.

"It therefore follows that as safe and effective means of preventing unplanned pregnancies... modern contraceptives are truly an indispensable component of public health care," they said.

Changing the subject

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper



wife or sister but a person in her own right "recognized... by her town of origin." She must also have been a person of strength and character since she stood by the cross beside the Blessed Virgin and St. John when all the other apostles were scared witless and hid, as some would put it, under the bed.

For some the idea that Church Fathers actually suppressed women's contribution to the early church is enough to shake their faith. In this case it's good to differentiate between the institution and the fallible male, not to mention that the latest scandals into sexual deviance and the subsequent cover-up (by other men naturally) also contributed to the further fall in attendance at Mass at least in the Western world. (There are even some who say that if the nuns had known about the abuse of children, they would have reported it at once). One instance of deliberate alteration is the change in name of an early apostle mentioned by St. Paul called "Junia" to "Junius." Some female scholars believe that this was done to further exclude women.

Reinterpretation of Mary Magdalene has led to research and studies of other women in the Bible especially the much-maligned Eve. First the two versions of creation: one that she was made from Adam's rib (although there's a joke going around that it was the other way round) and the other that God simultaneously made both men and women equal. After which remember Adam excusing himself by claiming "the woman made me?" No one

has yet called our original ancestor a coward for doing so. Yet Eve from that moment became the original symbol of temptress. Because of this "women (were and no doubt still are) considered by many—mostly male I'm sure) are responsible for sin and should therefore be subservient to men." Thank heaven, the early Filipinos hadn't heard of the Bible story and even if the macho Spaniards relegated us to the kitchen and the bedroom it was more for show than actual practice. Philippine colonial society may have been officially patriarchal but Filipina women held the purse strings.

For reasons best known to themselves men have always preferred women who are "mahinhin." Take Maria Clara going bananas because of lost love, Juliet, Cressida, et. al and contrast them to Judith who saved Israel. The leader of the enemy, Holofernes, has the hots for her and thus Judith convinces to be alone with him and proceeds to decapitate him, taking his head home in a bag. How's that for "mahinhin"? Perhaps it's to the male's advantage to think of women as weak and passive, or to prefer them that way.

While for centuries women were marginalized it's important to note the importance God placed on them. There's Mary, of course, the Mother of Jesus and her cousin Elizabeth. With Elizabeth "the history of the Old Testament ends with the last of the Hebrew prophets, John" and with Mary, "a new history of salvation will begin with the life, death and resurrection of her Son," our Savior.

So the next time the feast day of Mary Magdalene on July 22 rolls along, give a salute to all women. For those interested in new scholarship and literary books about her you can log on to Magdalene.org or Beliefnet.com. Now about us being ordained priests...

(Data from "Women of the Bible," Newsweek, Dec. 8).

RATHER than discuss with you the state of our politics (strictly anal stage with no hope of maturity in the near future what with the extreme cynicism of our movers and shakers) let's talk about Mary Magdalene, the sinner/saint who, it seems, wasn't a sinner after all. To start her name was probably Miriam and she came from the fishing village of Magdala (refer to your history and the little church near Gen. Aguinaldo's house called Maria Magdalo and the revolutionary group that went by the name Magdalo).

That she was Jesus Christ's trusted confidante may not be a far fetched conclusion since it was she who discovered the empty tomb, she to whom the angel first spoke to and she who informed the 11 that Christ had risen. Women have long thought of her as the first female apostle even if it's dangerous ground to tread since the next step is—why not women priests? If you've read Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code," (if you haven't, you should; it's fun), you'll realize that a lot of church regulations were made by men for men to the exclusion of women. Biblical female scholars now accuse men of misreading key texts of the Bible and thereby erroneously (or if you wish deliberately) misinterpreting in order to maintain male dominance in the church. We do know that certain books of the Bible were excluded from the present version sometime in the 4th century—the Gospel of Thomas, the Book of Enoch, Philip, and who knows what else? Aside from that texts were edited: of the 3,000 characters in the Book only 10 percent are women. Note that the Sermon on the Mount mentions 5,000 present "not including women and children." Obviously, we weren't important enough. But think of how many more were fed by Jesus in that case.

Mary of Magdala is now being viewed as a symbol or role model, one not identified as mother,

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Flip-flop Gloria**PINOY KASI***Michael L. Tan*

FLIP-flop word is an intriguing word, first coined in the 1970s to refer to rubber sandals but which, over the last 30 years, has come to refer to the way politicians change their minds on social issues. When applied to politicians, the term conjures images of acrobats and gymnasts flipping about in the air.

Our President is rapidly becoming the authority on flip-flops, epitomized by her December 2002 declaration that she would not run for president, followed 10 months later by, well, a flip-flop.

Her latest flip-flop relates to the lifting of the moratorium on the death penalty. Let's do a chronological review of what's been happening here. When she first assumed office, the President said she would continue the moratorium on the death penalty that had first been imposed by Joseph Estrada, the latter's decision made because of the Catholic Jubilee year celebration in 2000.

But in her 2002 State of the Nation Address, Macapagal began to backtrack, announcing that perhaps drug traffickers should be executed. Nothing came out of that, presumably because the Catholic hierarchy protested.

Then we had this current rash of kidnappings of Chinoys. Just two weeks

ago, the Chinoy (Chinese-Filipino) community converted the funeral of kidnap victim Betti Chua Sy into a protest march against government for its slow action in dealing with crimes. Among the placards at the funeral were those calling for the execution of kidnappers.

The President first responded by saying she was sticking to the moratorium but flip-flopped last week. Legally, capital punishment still exists in the Philippines but the President has been able to impose a de facto moratorium by granting reprieves to death row convicts as their execution dates approach. She has said she would no longer do this starting in January.

My political views are clear to those who follow my column, falling into what people would call "liberal." This includes opposition to the death penalty. But I have always respected people, including conservatives, who fight for their views, no matter how different they are from mine.

That respect is something I have never been able to extend to the President. I have said before she lacks sincerity. I will say now she lacks convictions. She wants to look tough but really lives day to day on public opinion polls, flip-flopping her way through her presidency as the nation crumbles.

There is no better proof of this than in the way she's handling this issue of the death penalty. When she announced she would allow executions to proceed, she said she was doing this for the greater public good. Catholic Church officials and anti-death penalty advocates protested. Now she's done another flip-flop by qualifying that "only" kidnappers will be executed. No wonder the public perception is that she did this mainly for the Chinoy community.

This selective policy is totally ridiculous. I have gotten phone calls from Chinoys who favor the death penalty but who see Macapagal's selective policy as contradicting their arguments for capital punishment. They see the death penalty as an effective anti-crime deterrent only if it is applied consistently. Why, for example, are drug traffickers exempted,

when they inflict so much more harm on so many people? Some Chinoys are even worried that Macapagal's decision will fuel anti-Chinese sentiment, that the President might be seen as coddling the Chinese, especially since so many drug traffickers are Chinese nationals.

For those of us who oppose the death penalty, the President's selective policy shows, precisely, how arbitrary capital punishment can be. We've pointed out how the death penalty usually victimizes the poor, targeting the small fry in criminal syndicates rather than the big bosses. Now, with Gloria Macapagal, we see how it becomes a political tool, applied according to presidential whim. Last year she wanted drug traffickers executed. This year it's the kidnappers. Maybe next year, if she wins in the election, she might want it implemented for plundering ex-presidents.

Flip-flops reflect an amoral mind-set, an inability to spell out one's convictions and to stand by them. Given Gloria Macapagal's flip-flops, even her "tough" stands become suspect. I've always felt her stubborn loyalty to George Bush has nothing to do with a belief in fighting terrorism or bringing democracy to Iraq or Afghanistan. No, she is subservient to

Bush because she needs the US government as an "anting-anting" (amulet) to stay in power, to protect herself from other politicians and the discontented military.

If there is anything that Gloria Macapagal seems convinced about it is that she is God's gift to the Filipino, that we need her another six years... or more. She'll flip as often as she thinks is needed to fulfill that divine mandate, but she better be careful because eventually, Filipinos just might give a new meaning to political flip-flops, wondering if this President has flipped and that it's time for them to declare her a flop.

Announcement: The UP Film Institute presents Cine Veritas from Dec. 9 to 15 to celebrate Human Rights Day. Several of your favorite I-Witness documentaries will be shown for free, including favorites like Walang Bakas on involuntary disappearances (Dec. 9, 7 PM), Dekada '70 on the turbulent 1970s (December 10, 7 PM), Babalik na si Ma'am on returning overseas workers (December 11, 7 PM). Call 9287021, locals 595/ 596, 313 or email i-w2@gmanetwork.com for a full schedule.

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Not enough done to protect Pinay OFWs

MALACANANG is not protecting migrant workers from sexual abuse.

The President must remember that talk is cheap and appropriate actions are needed for women migrant workers in distress.

The Migrant Sectoral Party denounces President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's slick statements on the supposed 'anticipation and pre-emption' of sexual abuse cases against Filipino migrant workers.

President Arroyo's statements in the light of Filipina migrant workers gang-raped in Kuwait are a vain attempt at covering up her government's criminal neglect of previous cases of women migrant worker victims in other nations.

Her administration abandoned Ifugao native Grace (not her real name), who was raped on May 26, 2003, jailed in June and deported last Nov. 9 by the United Arab Emirates government. President Arroyo's inaction has allowed the rapist, Emirates national Khalifa

Hassan Khalifa to go scot-free.

President Arroyo has not acted, either, on cases of at least seven other women compatriots who have been sexually abused and imprisoned on trumped-up charges of 'illicit affairs' or adultery in the United Arab Emirates.

In Saudi Arabia, Sarah Dematera has been languishing in jail since 1997 for a crime she never committed—kill her employer after only three days in the Kingdom.

If indeed President Macapagal-Arroyo is not merely out to get media mileage, she should order the labor department to mount a comprehensive program that shall provide stable, well-paying jobs here in the Philippines. This initiative is a better deterrent to sexual abuse cases involving Filipino migrant workers abroad.

—JOHN MONTERONA,
Migrant Sectoral Party
National Office: 115-B Kamuning
Road, Quezon City

Comfort and balm

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer has done a great service to our nation by coming up with the main editorials in its Opinion section, particularly on Oct. 25, 27, 29 and 30, and Nov. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 16. All were critical, incisive, well-written, exhaustive in research, somber in contemplation, full of insight, and—above all—true.

My family and I have derived much comfort in your editorials. Like my clear conscience, they (your editorials) served as a balm

that effectively alleviated the pain brought about by the impeachment move. Most important, they went a long way to enlighten the minds of the reading public. For all of these, I cannot thank you enough!

God bless the Philippine Daily Inquirer! You give honor to your profession.

—HILARIO G. DAVIDE JR.,
Chief Justice,
Supreme Court of the Philippines,
Padre Faura Street, Manila

Perspective on 2004

WITH ALL the dirty politicking going on, our "political leaders" must be reminded that the citizens hate dirty politics with a passion and have been turning blue in the face desperately advocating "new politics", meaning country first before ambition. How can we trust these politicians when they turn a deaf ear to the one thing that is asked of them. And why? Because they will do anything to win positions of power. They don't mind making our country the laughingstock of the international community with the possibility of a president who is not even a high school graduate or push our country from the frying pan to the fire by delivering our country to the drug cartels and making it a narco state.

Then, too, never has the political mudslinging been so dirty. Politicians are not only destroying each other, they are also bringing the whole country down. Can't the electoral contest be just about virtues and qualifications and leave the misdeeds to the courts? Enough is enough. The whole citizenry is getting demoralized when what we need is at least some semblance of self-respect to survive this madhouse called politics and make something of our lives and our country.

And why should politics be brought down to the level of these who vote only for the popular? Why can't there be efforts to bring them up to the level where they vote for those who have integrity and competence for the job ahead. They just have to be shown progressive communities (Marikina, Naga, Dagupan, etc.) and the kind

of leaders that made them so to make them get the idea.

Lastly, all the wannabes are, without exception, already campaigning, way ahead of the campaign period, not to mention exceeding the allowable limits on campaign spending, in violation of our election laws. How can we entrust the future of our country to leaders who think nothing of violating laws just to get elected.

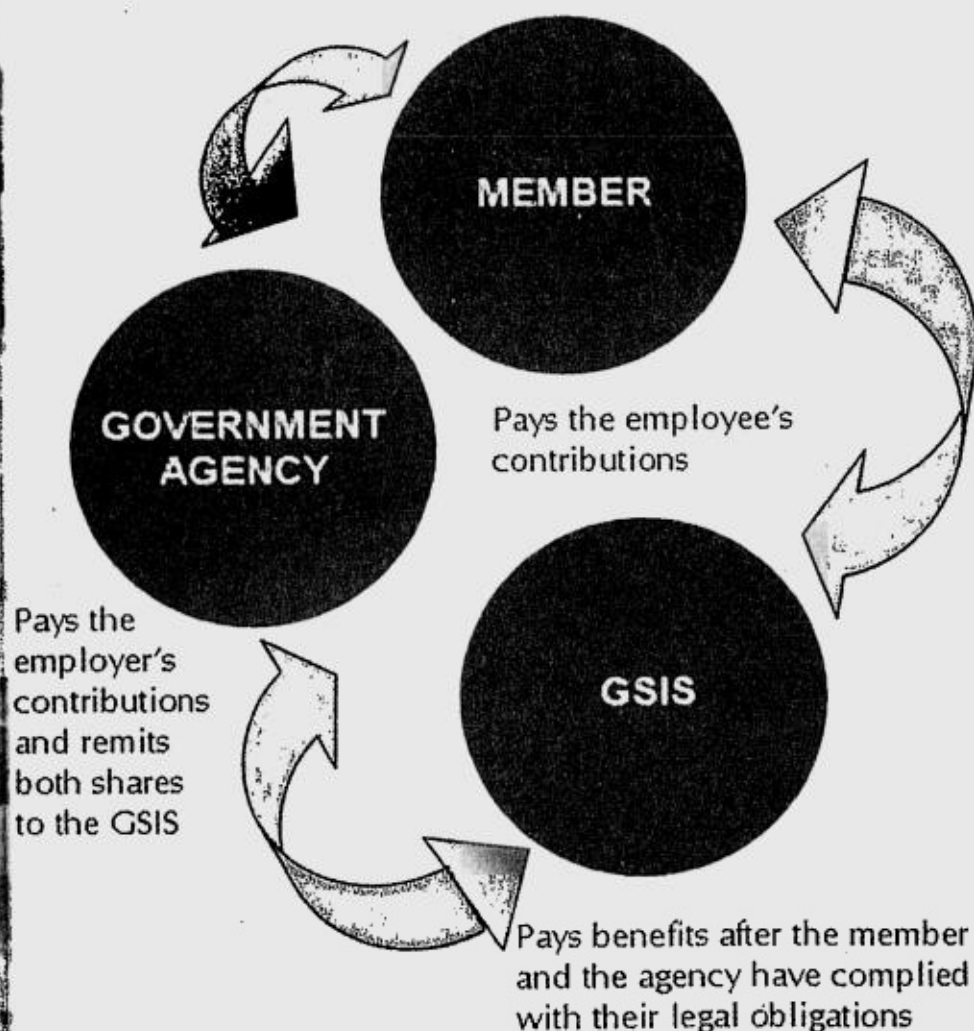
In the face of this very dismal and desperate situation allow us to say this again, before it is too late. First, those not qualified should step aside for they could ruin the country and bring disgrace upon themselves. Second, we must be wary of candidates awash with money from criminal syndicates who will use their stooges in public office to cry "political persecution" when the long hand of the law catches up with them. Third, will the good guys finally get their act together and not split the votes, otherwise, as in 1998, the least qualified could get elected president.

In the 1986 snap elections, in a true class act, Doy Laurel slid down to become the vice-presidential candidate of Cory Aquino and her chosen running mate, Nene Pimentel, stepped aside so that we could have a team that had a fighting chance to beat the dictator. Our political leaders then could sacrifice their ambition and become statesmen. We ask no less from our political leaders today.

—ANDIE C. LASALA,
Executive Director,
EVELYN L. KILAYKO,
Executive Committee Member
Konsyensyang Pilipino

Your GSIS
is a social system.

As such, it is made up of components
whose legal obligations
are interrelated and interdependent.



If any of these components of the system fails, the entire system will not survive.

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

105-ft Xmas 'tree of hope' stands proud in Cebu City

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—At the heart of this city's metropolitan area stands the one of the tallest Christmas trees in the country.

The "Tree of Hope," which is made of 6 tons of steel and adorned with 4,000 light bulbs, rises 105 feet from the ground, is strategically placed at the Fuente Osmeña Rotunda for everyone to see and appreciate.

Young and old Cebuanos, and even local and foreign tourists, flocked at the rotunda every night to get a glimpse of the spectacular giant tree with its display of lights and colors.

Cebu City Vice Mayor Michael Rama said the tree is one of the highlights of "Pasko sa Sugbo," a project of the city government that showcases holiday festivities such as lantern, caroling and belen-making contests for the whole of December.

Rama said the city government is grateful to the Lhullier family for constructing the giant Christmas tree that has made every Cebuano proud. "It's not usual to build the largest Christmas tree that is a product of determination, passion and love," he said.

Michael Lhullier, son of the Cebuano business magnate who owns several jewelry shops in Cebu and other parts of the country, told the INQUIRER that the setting up of a huge tree has become a tradition of their family.

This year, he said they decided to build one of the tallest Christmas trees in the country, as their tribute to Cebuanos.

"This is one way of giving tribute to Cebu where our company comes from and grows. The tree has been growing and the design is improving every year and we hope to bring it to the Cebuanos every year," Lhullier said.

They named it the "Tree of Hope" because they believe that there is much to hope for even in these trying times.

Jude Meliares, one of the brains behind the giant tree, told the INQUIRER that it took two months for them to design the tree.

The tree, which cost at least P1.5 million, has 11 layers, topped with a star measuring five feet that radiates a spectacular golden yellow color. He said 4,000 light bulbs represent the Lhullier's corporate colors of blue, green, red and yellow.

USAID FUNDS

\$60M set for war areas' rehab

COTABATO CITY—The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has earmarked at least \$60 million for a five-year sustainable peace and development plan to finance projects in war-ravaged areas of Mindanao.

Some of the programs included in the development plan have recently started, according to John Dalton, deputy chief of the USAID-funded Growth with Equity in Mindanao (GEM).

Dalton said the money channeled through their office involves a \$25 million budget for

the construction of community, small and medium scale infrastructure projects.

He said GEM hopes to build up to 500 small and medium scale infrastructure projects that include water systems, warehouses, boat landings, solar dryers, culverts, bridge and roadway upgrades and repairs, and commu-

nity centers.

Dalton said \$35 million would be spent for various activities and projects, such as export promotion, accountability and transparency in governance, policy modification assistance, education improvement, and business organizational development.

Meanwhile, Dalton said education remains GEM's main concern in the poor areas of Mindanao, particularly in the autonomous region.

He said ARMM has a high illit-

eracy rate, which hampers the region's development.

Dalton said through the funds GEM received from USAID, they provide assistance to improve education planning, school administration and teacher performance.

In Parang, Maguindanao, GEM launched last week its Computer Literacy and Internet Connection (Clic) Program.

US State Department Director Eunice Reddick and USAID officials including deputy mission director Frank Dono-

van led the program inauguration at the Parang Central Elementary Child Friendly School.

The Clic program, implemented in partnership with the Mindanao Economic Development Council as part of the Mindanao Natin initiative, provides selected schools with computers and a printer, basic software, Internet connection and training on basic computer and Internet use. Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau.

Congress on trash problem

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—At least 200 representatives from different municipalities in Quezon, environmental groups, government officials and the media vowed to strive for the full implementation of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act or Republic Act 9003.

"Most local officials already knew of this law but sad to say, they are not fully aware of its full provisions," said Emrich Borja, provincial environment and natural resources officer, during the First Quezon Solid Waste Management Congress here Friday.

Research by Tanggol Kalikasan, a legal defense center for the environment, found that only 10 percent of residents here are fully aware of RA 9003, while 90 percent have only heard of the law but are not fully aware of its provisions.

The activity is a major step toward the full implementation of the law on waste disposal, Borja said.

Borja also lamented that the people have been ignoring responsible waste disposal.

Businessman and environmentalist Proceso Alcala, this year's recipient of "Quezon Medalya ng Karangalan" for environmental protection, pointed out that congress participants still face a huge task in informing and educating people on government laws that deal with trash disposal.

Rice sufficiency still RP target

THE ADMINISTRATOR of the National Food Authority yesterday said attaining self-sufficiency in rice is tantamount to ensuring national security.

NFA chief Arthur Yap issued the statement in reaction to an article written by Dr. David Dawe, International Rice Research Institute economist, who said it was better for the country to import than aspire to be self-sufficient in rice.

Yap said the country's drive toward rice self-sufficiency is fueled by the fact that rice is the country's staple food. He said it is also a major component in the daily budget of Filipino families comprising 12 percent of the consumer price index.

"Every sovereign country...should protect its own sources of supply," said Yap.

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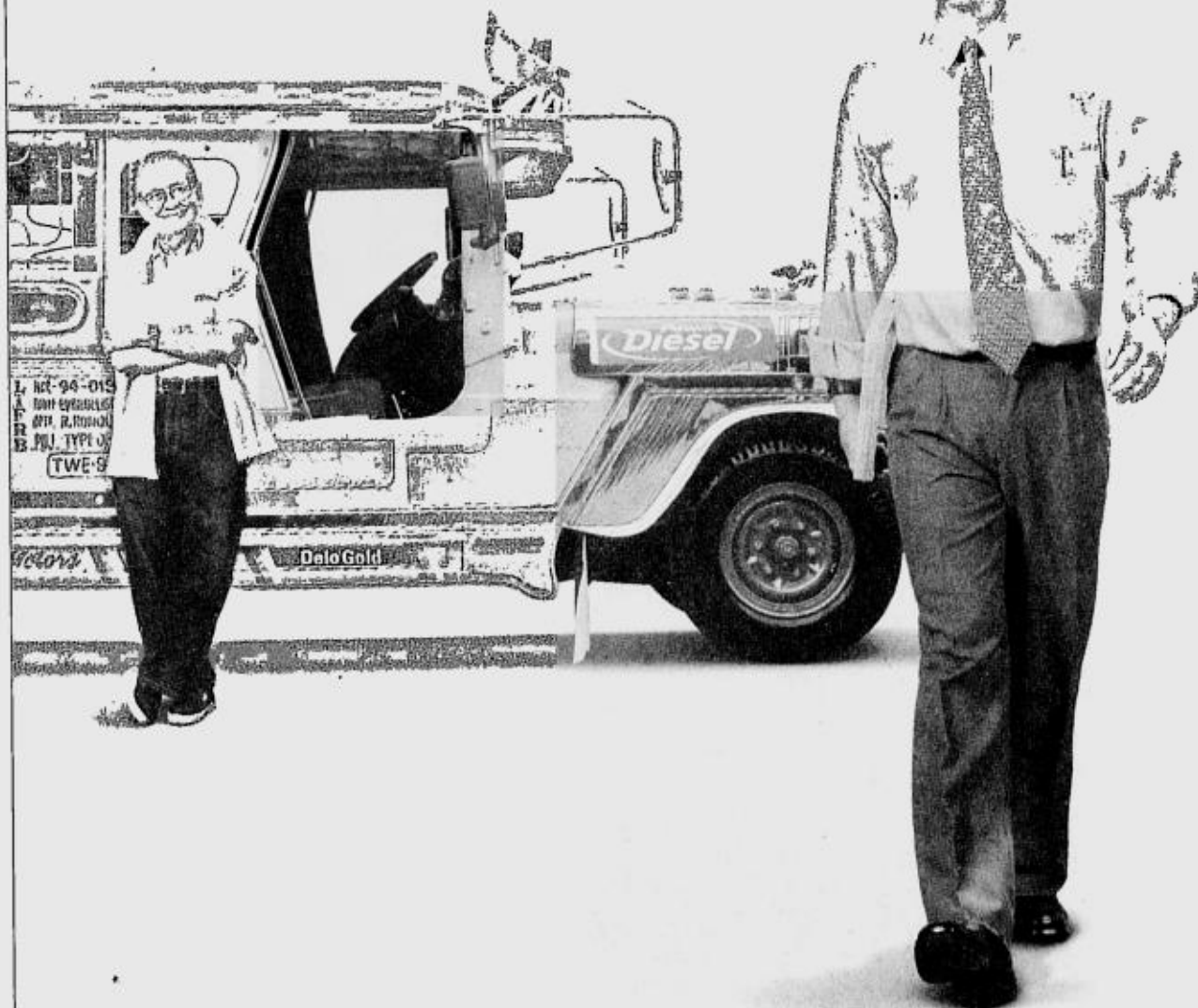
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Benguet farmers welcome malls' transfer to mean markets for local veggies

BAGUIO CITY—Benguet farmers are backing a set of Malacañang initiatives that would restore the prominence Benguet-grown vegetables used to have in Metro Manila markets.

These salad vegetables were displaced two years ago by smuggled Chinese products and by large-scale commercial importers, who get their supplies from Australia.

On Monday, Benguet Gov. Raul Molintas received in Manila four refrigerated vans and trucks to complement a P12-million chain of cold storage facilities, which were released by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The cold chain is crucial to a post-harvest shipping routine, which the farmers agreed to overhaul to improve post-harvest shipments to Manila.

But it is the shift of brand-name shopping malls from Metro Manila to the provinces that has elated farmers here. La Trinidad, Benguet Mayor Nestor Fongwan said the closer the malls, the bigger the chance for these retail facilities to prefer local vegetables to imported produce.

"Buyers from SM Megamall had been asking Benguet for commitments to purchase orders for fresh vegetables, but they were not impressed about our post-harvest system," Fongwan said.

A Department of Agriculture

study criticized the local industry's packing and shipping method, which damages up to 20 percent of 1 million kilos of produce that are shipped daily to Metro Manila.

A cold storage facility, however, and an efficient transport system will cut down shipping losses to a minimum and increase the value of produce, Fongwan said.

"Our vegetables match the quality of imports but farmers price broccoli at P25 a kilo here. Once the broccoli is frozen, farmers could charge up to P80, without the mark-up of middlemen," he said.

The refrigerated trucks will ship the produce directly to supermarkets in Metro Manila under an aggressive marketing system now being fine-tuned by the provincial government.

But many of Benguet's traditional Manila buyers have since relocated to or have opened new stores in Pampanga, Bulacan, Pangasinan and now, Baguio City.

SM City Baguio opened on Nov. 21, while another SM mall opened in Marilao, Bulacan.

Already, buyers for these SM malls have started to give Benguet vegetables a second look, said Benguet Provincial Board member Johnny Uy, a farmer. Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



What Drives You  CALTEX

Comelec urged to hold new list-up in ARMM

COTABATO CITY—Leaders of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao have urged the Commission on Elections to hold a new round of registration of voters, claiming thousands had failed to enlist during the July 2003 general registration.

"Thousands of students would be deprived of their right to vote next year if our request is not granted," warned regional Assemblyman Ishamel Abubakar of the lone district of Tawi-Tawi.

Abubakar, also speaker of the ARMM's Regional Legislative Body, suggested that the five-day special registration be held this month "because students studying outside ARMM could come home for a vacation."

"They would be disenfranchised and if that happens, the Comelec would fail in its mission of making it sure that no one is disenfranchised

the coming elections," he said.

ARMM is composed of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and Marawi City.

The election body had earlier trashed the old list of voters and held a general registration of voters to come up with a new list.

About 1.2 million showed up and registered but later, the number was reduced to 984,000 when the poll body discovered that some registrants had cheated.

Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen sided with the call for an extended voters' registration.

Dilangalen said he believes the Comelec's information campaign failed to reach the ARMM's far-flung areas resulting in a reduction in the number of qualified voters.

In Masiu, Lanao del Sur, about 1,000 non-registered voters who peti-

tioned the Comelec for a new registration decried the poll body's alleged lack of sympathy to their plight.

They said that after more than three months of waiting, the Comelec had trashed their petition although the poll body granted a similar petition filed by residents of five other towns in Lanao del Sur.

The upset petitioners led by Masiu former Mayor Macacuna Pangandaman said they were filing a case at the Supreme Court.

Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos said he doubts whether another registration for the ARMM was possible given the volume of work the poll body expects with the upcoming filing of certificates of candidacy.

But he said the issue would still be discussed during an en banc session. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Left says pols seek backing of militants

MATI, Davao Oriental—Re-electionist politicians in the four Davao provinces appear to have realized the influence of leftist groups and have been courting them for support in 2004.

Bonifacio Salo, coordinator of Bayan Muna in Davao Oriental, said this early, politicians in Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Compostela Valley, have swamped his group with "requests or proposals" for support.

"They realized that our group is such a big force that we can make and unmake politicians. Practically all of those we had supported in the 2001 elections had won," Salo said.

Some of those who approached them have dangled money according to Salo.

But he said Bayan Muna told the politicians that "our political support is not for sale."

"We do not support politicians just because he or she had offered huge amounts of money for the group. We will only support those who look after the welfare of the lumad, the abused sector and the underprivileged. We can't be bought by money. No amount of money can make us support corrupt politicians," Salo said.

He said winning politicians are welcome to give funds in the form of donations for the party's various projects.

"But we do not make, as a precondition of our political support, the collection of money from politicians because that is tantamount to extortion," Salo said. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Warlords, kin asked to prevent bloodshed in next year's polls

COTABATO CITY—Wary of the prevailing "bad blood" among political warlords and relatives over the issue of territorial control in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao as the May 2004 elections nears, an erstwhile key figure in the region's development appealed for unity and fair play to avoid bloodshed.

Former ARMM Gov. Lininding Pangandaman, 73, has urged candidates for elective positions, especially contesting relatives, not to use violence in their campaigns.

The early reminder of Pangandaman, a lawyer, who served as the country's ambassador to Saudi Arabia in the 1970s, was an attempt to thwart any possible election-related violence among followers and supporters of political rivals.

Pangandaman, who was behind the concreting of the Narciso Ramos Highway connecting this city to Marawi in Lanao del Sur, also asked military and police authorities, particularly the Commission on Elections, to remain neutral in enforcing the law and other duties that they are mandated to perform.

The Comelec has set Dec. 15 to Jan. 2 as period for national and local candidates to file their certificates of candidacy before the poll body.

Senior Supt. Isnaji Bantala,

ARMM police chief, said one of his priority concerns is to be able to reconcile feuding political clans in Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan, "who usually resort to killing one another in hotly contested political exercises despite their being relatives."

Pangandaman said his hometown of Masiu in Lanao del Sur is seen to have at least five of his relatives contesting the reelection bid of his grandson Mayor Nasib Gubar Pangandaman.

"I appeal that the election issue be discussed among themselves in a peaceful way. In the name of Islam which means peace, I call upon my relatives to promote the faith of oneness and understanding," Pangandaman told the INQUIRER.

Hadji Usman Zaman, president of Masiu Traders Association, said the problem of warring Moro clans in the coming elections could be aggravated by the Comelec's alleged failure to register some 1,102 would-be voters.

Zaman and some residents in the area assailed the poll body for reporting that the filled up application forms and four diskettes from the data capturing machine were missing, depriving the Masiu electorate from exercising their right to vote in May. *Charlie C. Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Lito Lapid's son Lakas bet for Pampanga gov

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Gov. Manuel Lapid's son led the official candidates of the Lakas Christian-Muslim Democrats in Pampanga who, on Monday's declaration here, vowed to assure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in her home province in the 2004 elections.

The decision of the Lakas-CMD national directorate to choose Board Member Mark Lapid over senior party member Rep. Oscar Rodriguez, for the post of governor put an end to reports of internal rift within the local party, the governor said.

The younger Lapid claimed his father's "charisma with the masses" was going to work to his advantage but said his campaign largely rested on his own hardwork.

"I've been in public service for eight years now but always, I have been in the shadow of Lito Lapid. It's my turn now," he told reporters here.

But while the younger Lapid's political plan was already clear, Lapid's next aspiration remained uncertain.

During the declaration rites that he headed as provincial party chair, Lapid was not announced as the official Lakas mayoral or congressional contender in Angeles City.

Lapid said this was so because he was still keeping his options open until after the national directorate finalized plans to include him in the administration's senatorial slate.

Angeles City Mayor Carmelo Lazatin was absent at Monday's rites. Lazatin on Friday said he was either seeking reelection or considering going back to Congress.

The national directorate, Lapid said, also approved Board Member Joseller "Yeng" Guiao as the running mate of the younger Lapid.

Guiao is the eldest son of the late Gov. Bren Guiao, a close ally of former President Corazon Aquino. Board Member Guiao said he was more interested in seeking a congressional seat in the province's first district.

The Lakas mayoral lineup in 17 towns and two cities consisted of 13 incumbents, three political neophytes, two vice mayors and a congressman.

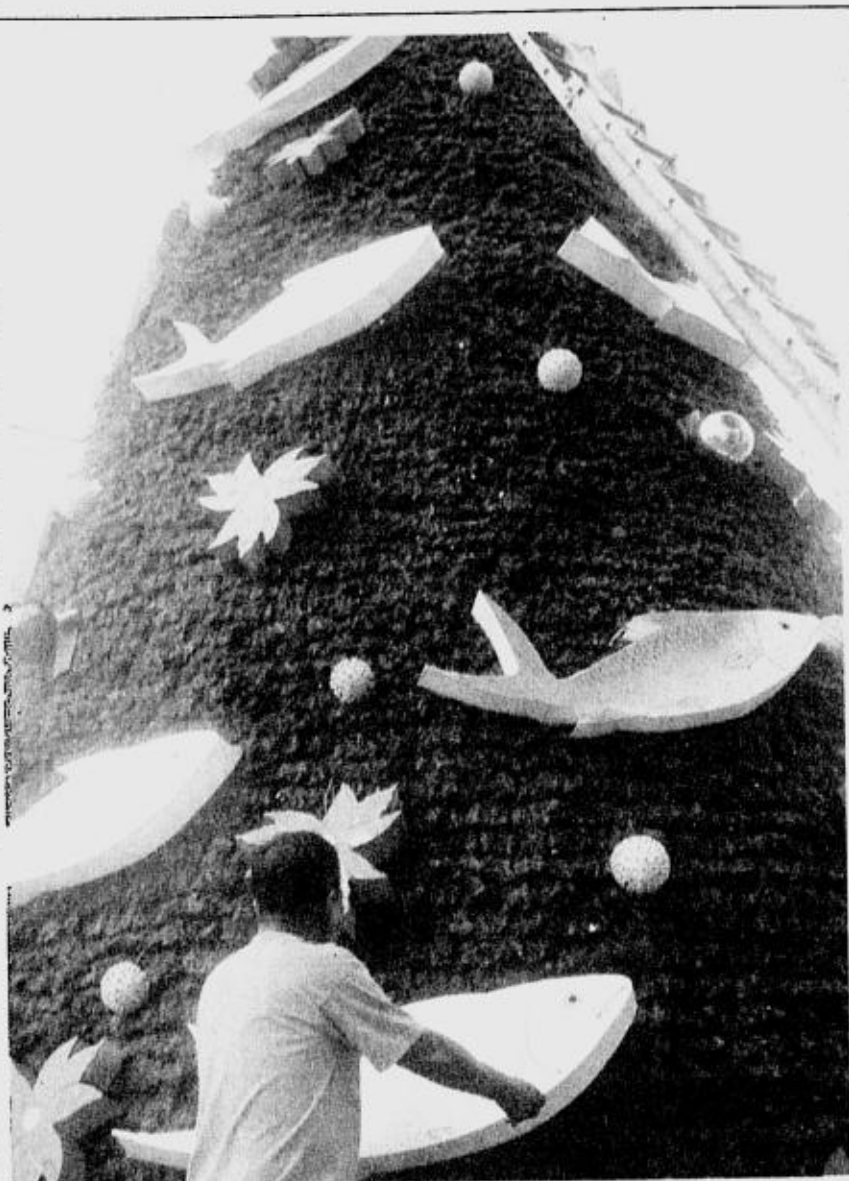
Vice Gov. Juan Miguel Arroyo, the President's eldest son, is the Lakas congressional candidate for the second district.

The advantage of the lineup, according to Arroyo, is "youth and experience."

Health Assistant Secretary Eric Domingo and Transportation Assistant Secretary Rene Maglanque are seeking House seats for the third and fourth district, respectively.

"We are united for the President," Arroyo said.

Weakened by shifts in party alliances, only Arayat, Bacolor and Lubao towns are in the hands of the opposition or independent candidates. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



FISHERY TREE

Workers in Dagupan City prepare a Christmas tree adorned with images of milkfish, which has given the city the tag 'Bangus Capital of the World.' The tree was built in front of the city museum.

RAY ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Key role of provinces in anti-crime bid seen

CHECKPOINTS in provinces near Metro Manila helped ensure the success of the first day of checkpoints in the metropolis that were meant as "choke points" against criminality and terrorism, according to the head of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktaf).

Angelo Reyes, former defense secretary and Naktaf head, said checkpoints set up in 11 corridors that lead to Metro Manila would inspect motorists using heavily tinted windows and using questionable license plates.

In a statement, Reyes said the first day of the checkpoints in Metro Manila was successful because police and military personnel who manned them were "courteous."

There are to be no frisking during searches at checkpoints, according to Reyes.

He said police visibility is now in three shifts in 24 hours and includes police patrols in areas outside Metro Manila like Bulacan, Laguna and Cavite.

"We are here to deter criminality, protect the people and respect their rights," said Reyes' statement.

Reyes was appointed Naktaf chief amid a spate of kidnappings in Metro Manila that alarmed the Filipino-Chinese business community.

Reyes said the checkpoints, taken as a step in preventing crimes, would not lead to abuses.

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MOTORCADE ROUTE AND VICINITY MAP

Isabela escapee slain

ROXAS, Isabela—One of two prisoners who escaped the provincial jail after killing a jail guard on Thursday was killed in a gunfight with policemen here on Saturday dawn.

Insp. Rogelio Talip, the town's deputy police chief, said the prisoner, Augusto Valmeo, 30, refused to surrender and shot it out with policemen who were hunting him and cornered him in a house in Barangay Matusalem here.

Last Thursday, Valmeo and Luciano Ballaad, both prisoners of the Isabela provincial jail, stabbed and shot to death their guard-escort Arnel de Guzman.

De Guzman escorted the two prisoners to a court hearing in this town on Thursday. When the hearing was postponed, Valmeo asked De Guzman and Ballaad to have lunch at the house of his brother-in-law in Luna town.

De Guzman removed the handcuffs of the prisoners on their way back to the provincial jail. But along the way Ballaad stabbed De Guzman with his concealed knife while Valmeo grabbed the guard's gun and shot the jail guard four times. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Watershed settlers face 'water terrorism' raps

COTABATO CITY—The government is set to file a class suit for "water terrorism and human rights violation" against some 200 family-dwellers of the Dimapato watershed in two nearby Maguindanao towns, officials said on Thursday.

Kahil Kedtag, Maguindanao's first district environment and natural resources officer, made this announcement at the launching in Parang town of the anti-illegal logging task force in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

"This is a clear form of terrorism and a massive violation of human rights, the human rights of the water consumer," Kedtag said of the settlement inside the province's water-

shed area, where the city and two other Maguindanao towns draws its water supply.

Delfin Hilario, manager of the Cotabato City Waterworks District, said the intrusion into the watershed area of Datu Odin Sinsuat and Upi towns poses danger to local water consumers with contamination being imminent.

Hilario said human dwellings in the "critical watershed area" has deteriorated the quality of the city's piped-in water supply.

Delfin said "diplomatic persuasion" in the past had failed and that "the ultimate option would have to be forced eviction." **Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau**

PROTEST VS OIL PRICE HIKES

Transport strike grips Bacolod

BACOLOD CITY—Classes were suspended yesterday when members of a militant drivers' group began their two-day strike to demand for a P1 fare hike and the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Law.

Jessie Ortega, secretary general of the United Negros Drivers Operators Center (Undoc), said the protest crippled about 85 percent of public transportation here.

He said he expected more drivers and operators to join the strike today.

But Senior Supt. Vicente Ponteras, Negros Occidental provincial director, said only 70 percent of public transport in Bacolod and 30 percent in Negros Occidental

were affected by the strike.

Although classes in both public and private schools in Bacolod were suspended, a few jeepneys, taxicabs, tricycles and buses continued to operate yesterday.

Some employees, however, complained that they failed to get to work due to lack of public transportation.

The Undoc members were demanding the scrapping of the Oil Deregulation Law, which they blame for the spiraling increase in oil prices. They also pushed for a P1 fare hike.

Bacolod Bishop Vicente Navarro said he was supporting the two-day transportation strike because the increases in oil prices were hurting the poor who could

barely make ends meet.

The bishop, however, prayed that the strike would be peaceful.

"The strike is one way of creating awareness and calling the attention of the national government to the plight of the people so that something is done about the arbitrary moves of oil companies to raise prices anytime," he said.

"The whole country is already suffering. When oil prices increase, the price of commodities go up," he added.

While the rich may not feel the series of oil price increases, Navarro said these were hurting the poor.

Militant groups such as the Sanlakas, Buklurang Mangga-

gawang Pilipino and Partido ng Manggagawa, were supporting the demand of Undoc to abolish the Oil Deregulation Law.

The group said the series of adjustments in oil prices were too much for the people to bear.

But the strike did not have the support of the Bacolod Association of Public Utility Operators (Bapo).

In a statement, the Bapo said they were not joining the strike because they believed it was not the solution or the right avenue to call for the repeal of the Oil Deregulation Law.

The group said the government had no control over prices of crude oil. **Carla R Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau**

ROUNDUP

Firm loses P2M in robbery

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Nestlé Philippines Inc. lost over P2 million worth of products to highway robbers when one of its delivery trucks was hijacked by four unidentified suspects in Malvar, Batangas on Nov. 30. Batangas police said truck driver Gilbert Ribamonte and four truck helpers were traversing the highway aboard a delivery truck at around 4 a.m. when Cabuyao asked him to stop in a waiting shed to urinate. Four armed men appeared and ordered them to alight from their vehicle. The victims said the suspects hogtied and blindfolded them and took away P31,000 in cash and the victims' personal belongings. They were then dumped in a grassy area in Barangay Sampaloc, Talisay. **Marion Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

393 'rebels' yield

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—The Army's Southern Luzon Command said at least 393 suspected members of the "shadow government" of the Communist Party of the Philippines has surrendered. Maj. Jose Brosa, Solcom public information officer, Barangay Revolutionary Committee members in San Francisco, Quezon had surfaced and denounced the alleged atrocities of the New People's Army. A video showed military and local government officials receiving the suspected rebel sympathizers in a ceremony in San Francisco on Nov. 30. But communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said it was possible those who yielded were not real rebels.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Water system rehab

BACACAY, Albay—Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro said the P3-million Tiwi water system rehabilitation project is now complete. She assured the public that the water source is not affected by the geothermal exploration. The P3-million fund was taken from Luistro's Priority Development Assistance Fund. **Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

P5-M bank robbery

NAGA CITY—An undetermined number of suspects robbed the Naga City branch of the Philippine Veterans Bank on Elias Angeles Street here at about midnight, Wednesday, taking with them some P5 million in cash. Police said the robbery could be an inside job after recovering equipment that produce oxy-acetylene used to rip through the two thick vaults of the bank. Quinlano also said there were no security guards in the bank when the robbery happened. The three security guards left at 5 or at 7 p.m. **Alan Palayo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

Mayon science centrum

TABACO CITY—A science centrum and planetarium is being constructed on the Mayon Volcano beside the Mayon Skyline Resort Hotel. The project is a joint effort of the city government and the Philippine Tourism Authority. Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro, House committee on tourism chair, said the science centrum will have a giant telescope for stargazing as well as films on astronomy, geology, volcanology and evolution of man. Outside the centrum, a playhouse for children, a monkey bridge and a flora and fauna garden will be put up.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Jobs for Bicolanos

LEGAZPI CITY—After about 18 series of job fairs conducted in Bicol this year, almost 620 Bicolanos are now enjoying new jobs, here and abroad, according to the Department of Labor and Employment in the region. In their accomplishment report, DOLE said that a 50-percent increase in job generated was noted this year compared to last year. Employment rate in Bicol increased by 2.8 percent this year from last year's 87.6 percent. **Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau**

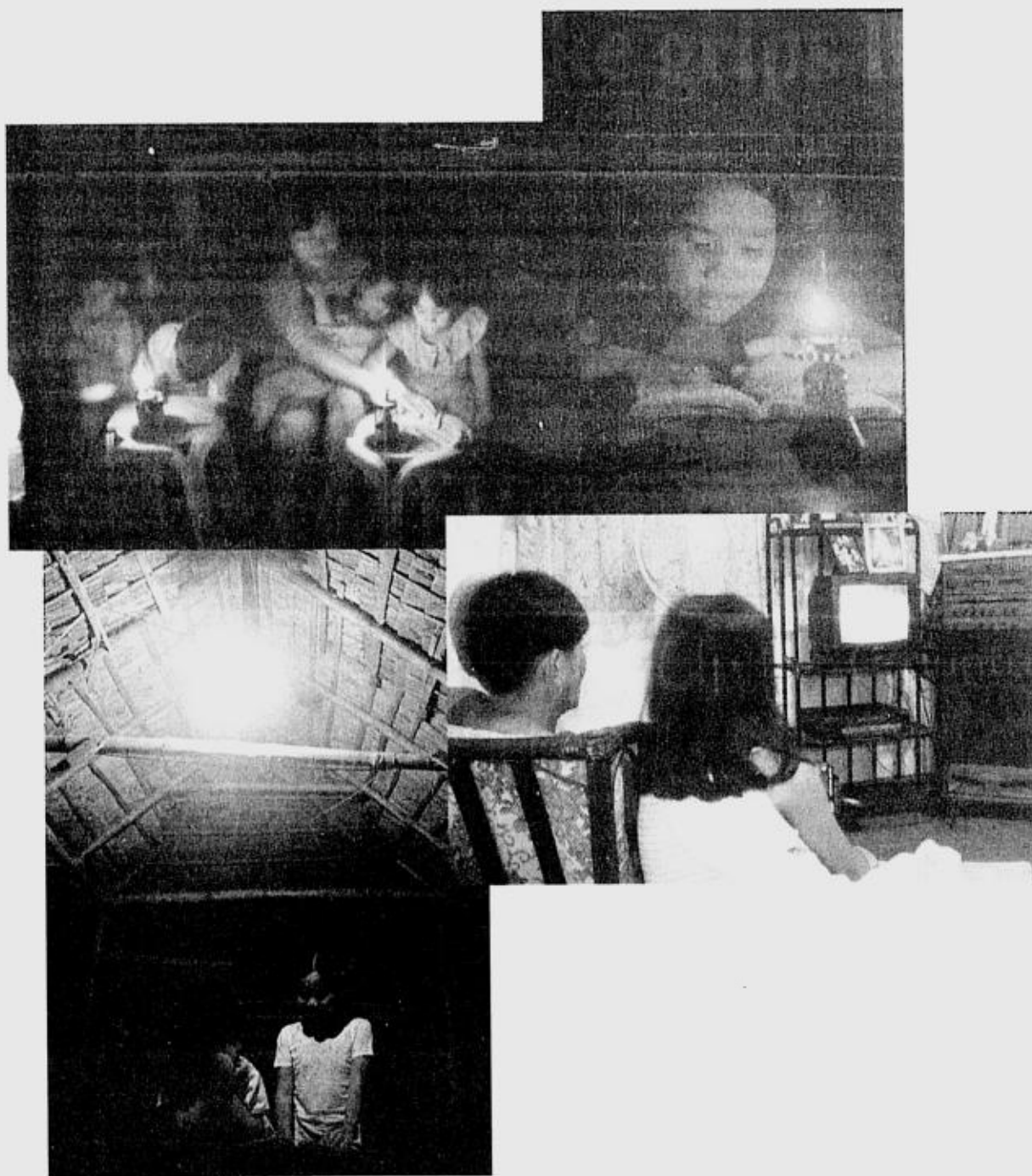
Rally vs demolition

BAGUIO CITY—Residents staged a rally on Wednesday to protest the demolition of 600 squatter shanties and the proliferation of fake land titles in the city. They said the shanties in a subdivision here were being demolished without provisions for the relocation of their occupants. They said the occupants were promised a relocation site but until now no site had been identified by the subdivision owner. **Rod Bansag, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

2 cops repel 30 rebs

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Two policemen in Zaragoza town in Nueva Ecija repulsed on Sunday at least 30 New People's Army rebels, and killed two rebels, the province's police director said. Armed with M-16 rifles, SPO3 Nestor Magtibay and SPO1 Daniel Donato, the only policemen on duty, defended the police station in Barangay San Rosario Young in Zaragoza. Senior Supt. Luisito Palmara said. Magtibay was wounded in the arm. Five other rebels were also wounded. The rebels reportedly belonged to the NPA's central guerrilla front based in Capas, Tarlac. **Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk**

A Long, Hard Climb in Lighting Up the Countryside, But Not Impossible...



On mountaintops. Across rivers. In conflict-affected areas. Up north. Down south. All of 41, 995 barangays nationwide to be energized by 2006.

Impossible? Not without political will. Beginning 2001, President Arroyo, in her State-of-the-Nation Address, vowed to bring electricity to four barangays everyday or to 1,500 barangays in a year from only 400 barangays energized in 1992.

In less than three years (Jan. 2001-Sept. 2003), about 3,815 barangays were lighted up. Children could now study in the evening. Families could earn extra income from livelihood projects.

Some 4,542 remaining barangays still need to be energized. It may be a long hard climb but not impossible when the government, the private sector and the people themselves pool together to uplift the quality of life of the Filipino by providing a basic necessity-ELECTRICITY.



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

www.doe.gov.ph

840-14-01 to 40

Let Your Light Shine!

AFP says greed did Robot in

He looked harmless ...

From page A1

Sayyaf bandits involved in the raid on the Malaysian resort and the kidnapping of 21 mostly European victims, had been killed in clashes with the military.

The dead included Andang's co-leader Mujib Susukan.

Abaya said troops would now intensify their hunt for the remaining Abu Sayyaf leaders: Khadaffy Janjalani, Radulan Sahiron, Abu Sulaiman and Hamsiraji Sali.

Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, the AFP chief information officer, said Andang's capture would "weaken" the bandit group, whose strength he said has been whittled down to at least 280.

"We hope that his capture would lead to more captures of the Abu Sayyaf leaders, and hopefully, this would eventually lead to the degrading of the Abu Sayyaf capability."

Heavy blow

President Macapagal-Arroyo welcomed Andang's arrest, saying it was "a heavy blow" to the Abu Sayyaf and spurred the military to finish the job.

The President told reporters that the capture had "decimated heavily" the Abu Sayyaf which has made it "weary and on the run."

"Relentless pressure is taking its toll and we will keep it up until all the terrorists are accounted for and they no longer pose a threat. The AFP is determined to finish the job against the Abu Sayyaf even as we pursue a second front against the clandestine cells of the JI," the President said, referring to the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terrorist group.

"We will continue to work hard with our communities on the ground and our global allies in finishing off terror everywhere."

Ms Macapagal commended the military operatives who carried out Sunday's operation.

Andang's exact whereabouts had been pinpointed by the military three months ago following a tip from a "walk-in informant," Lucero said.

"It was a good and classic case of good intelligence; not just intelligence as a concept, but tactical intelligence. Galib Andang was pinpointed at a specific point," he said.

Lucero said Andang was wounded in "an encounter" during the raid. "There was resistance actually. The group was able to fire back."

The raiding team, composed of intelligence agents and members of the 33rd Infantry Battalion and Light Armored Company, failed to recover any firearms during the raid and arrest any other suspects, he added.

Abaya said the military finally captured the bandit leader because of "an informant who had access to Robot's plans."

He denied reports that Robot had surrendered after a negotiation.



COMMANDER Robot

"That is not true. There was no surrender. In fact, he was captured while planning to kidnap anew," Abaya said.

Abaya said a soldier was wounded during the brief encounter in Barangay Panabuan in Indanan.

Hospital interview

While he was still at the Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga, Andang looked like he had already accepted his fate.

Speaking to Mayor Maria Clara Lobregat from his hospital bed, the bandit leader meekly said that if he survived his injuries, he would reform and start a new life.

"Gusto ko nang magbagong buhay, at nagbabagong buhay na ako (I want to start a new life, I am starting over)," Andang said.

He also clarified reports that he was behind several other high-profile abductions.

Andang said his last involvement was the Sipadan incident.

Despite his condition, Andang managed to provoke laughter when he started talking about how he divided his P10 million share of the Sipadan ransom.

He said his first and second wives got P1 million each, while his third wife, Nariman, got P2 million.

That, Andang said, was his biggest mistake because soon after, Nariman deserted him.

The Abu Sayyaf leader said he kept some of the money while he distributed the rest to his neighbors in Barangay Carawan in Patikul town.

Robot's answer to questions about how he became "risoy" (lighter-skinned) also elicited laughter. In 2000, at the time of the Sipadan crisis, the Abu Sayyaf leader was thin and had

a brown complexion.

When Abaya asked him in the hospital why his looks had changed, he replied: "I just stayed home."

Back in Manila, Abaya also tried to strike a light note. Observing that amputation was likely, Abaya said: "There is a plan to amputate and replace this with robotic (legs). That's why he would live up to his name as Commander Robotic," he said in jest.

Andang was brought to the V Luna Medical Center at around 5 p.m. yesterday.

RP jurisdiction

At the Department of Foreign Affairs, Secretary Blas F. Ople said the Philippine government would retain "exclusive jurisdiction" over Andang, but other countries who wanted to try him for kidnapping and other crimes may be allowed to share custody.

Mohamed Taufik, Malaysian ambassador to the Philippines, told reporters that Andang's capture was "long overdue."

"I really hope that authorities will keep a close watch on him and he doesn't do an Al-Ghozi. Justice should be meted on him," he added, referring to convicted JI bomber Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi who was killed after escaping from military custody.

Ronald Post, the US Embassy's counselor for public affairs, was also happy with Andang's capture.

"It's a good development. We are pleased that he has been detained and will face justice," he said.

Congressmen from Mindanao expressed confidence that the remaining Abu Sayyaf leaders would fall like "dominos" following Andang's arrest.

Representatives Prospero Pichay (Surigao del Sur), Prospero Nograles (Davao City), Douglas Cagas (Davao del Sur), Prospero Amato and Manuel Zamora (Compostela Valley) and Mayo Almario (Davao Oriental) said the capture of Andang should serve as a stern warning against other terrorists and kidnappers to come out and surrender.

Administration senators also welcomed the arrest. But Sen. Manuel Villar urged military officials to ensure that Andang would not be able to escape from his detention cell, the same way Al-Ghozi did early this year.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. gushed over the capture, saying "this is a very auspicious season insofar as the peace and order situation is concerned."

At the Department of Justice, a government prosecutor said Andang, who has a P5-million bounty on his head, would get the death penalty for the Sipadan kidnappings.

"That's for sure," said State Prosecutor Aristotle Reyes, the prosecutor handling the case against Andang, who was charged with 21 counts of kidnapping for ransom with serious illegal detention before the Pasig Regional Trial Court. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Jerome Aning, Cynthia Balana, Christine O. Avendaño, Philip Tabeza, Tarra Quismundo; AP, AFP*

From page A1

He often posed for journalists, spraying fire from his assault rifle into the air, warning the military of serious repercussions if they attacked the group's hideouts.

Following the Sipadan spree, in which 21 mostly European hostages were abducted, Andang kidnapped a local teenage girl and forced her to marry him.

The bandit leader is believed to be in his 40s.

"Based on the revelations of his former captives, he is ruthless and fierce. I believe his capture will be a significant lesson to other members of the Abu Sayyaf," said Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces information officer.

Spanish missionaries

Before the Sipadan raid, Andang had been involved in a string of kidnappings, the military said.

Andang was tagged in the abduction of two Spanish missionary sisters in Patikul, Sulu, in January 1993, and of American cleric Fr. Clarence Bertelsman in Jolo, Sulu, in July 1994.

His group, known as Ahmad, also snatched Chinese Xiao Liu in Jolo, Sulu, in July 1998; Cheung Wu and So Chi Ming in Tawi-Tawi in September 1998, and Malaysian Toto Keke in Zamboanga City in July 1998.

They also seized locals, including Edwin Indoso in Jolo, Sulu, in March 2000; Patrick Viray in Sulu in February 2000; four local representatives of the Zismor company in Sulu in February 1995, and some teachers in Sulu in September 1997.

"More than that, he was also involved in the killing and kidnap of the Indonesians who were forcibly taken from a Singaporean tanker, and also the kidnapping of Jehovah Witnesses," Lucero told reporters.

Before he joined the Abu Sayyaf, Andang was a leader of the "lost command" of the Moro National Liberation Front, the mainstream secessionist group which forged a peace agreement with the government in 1996.

Born in Barangay Bandang, Talipao town in Sulu, Andang is married to Yayang Galib, Amina Rasul and Madlih Nariman Pawaki.

Sipadan raid

Andang led the raid in Sipadan with his sidekick and co-leader, the

younger Mujib Susukan. (Susukan was killed earlier this year.)

Reportedly hearing of a daring plan to abduct foreign hostages, Andang turned to a local politician for financial support.

He needed an initial P300,000 to proceed with the mission, and the local politician gave him the money.

In an interview in May of 2000, Andang bragged on camera that he was able to pull off the raid despite the fact that some of the other Abu Sayyaf leaders in Sulu thought he could not carry out a mission outside Sulu.

"Akala nila, mahina lang ito, nagkamali sila (They thought I didn't have what it takes. They were wrong)," he said with Mujib Susukan at his side.

In the initial stages of the negotiation for the release of the Sipadan hostages, other Abu Sayyaf commanders tried to relegate Robot to the background.

For the first media statement, it was Radulan Sahiron, alias Commander Putol, who faced the cameras and read their political demands.

It was Commanders Abu and Nadjmi who initially drafted the media statement read by Sahiron which was written in Tausug.

The hostages were initially held in the jungles of Talipao, an area controlled mostly by Andang and Susukan followers.

Many obstacles

Recalling the negotiations, Aventura said it was difficult to work with Andang in the sense that "there were many obstacles in dealing with him and among them were local politicians in Sulu."

From political demands, the negotiations zeroed in on monetary demands that led to the payment of possibly the biggest ransom in recent history.

When Andang and Susukan received the initial ransom payment for the Malaysian hostages, witnesses recalled that Robot even posed for an instant camera, saying "Remember."

Andang is the most senior Abu Sayyaf leader to be captured since the killing of Susukan in February.

Andang had sent surrender feelers last year, including an offer to give up his group's 100 M-16 rifles and other arms, but the military dismissed this as a trick. *With reports from AFP and Arlyn de la Cruz, contributor*

FPJ now ready to talk with Lacson

From page A1

taken by events because the actor had already been chosen the standard-bearer of the opposition coalition composed of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, PDP-Laban and the Puwersa ng Masa.

Forfeited

LDP president Edgardo Angara said Lacson had forfeited his chance to be selected standard-bearer of the coalition when he had himself proclaimed a presidential candidate on Dec. 4 by some LDP members.

"Because there is only one person left (seeking the nomination of the coalition), the committee is duty-bound to recognize this fact. We will consider FPJ as the person who is going to be the standard-bearer of the opposition," said former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, chair of the five-man nominating com-

mittee appointed by the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

Aquino reiterated on Saturday the proposal of the Lacson-LDP faction for the two presidential contenders to hold a one-on-one meeting to determine who should be the opposition's presidential candidate.

He said the meeting should be "without any interference from any of the party leaders" so that Poe and Lacson could come up with a united front. "I'm certain if they agree this will be supported by all of those in the opposition."

The opposition has no choice but to unite for the May 2004 poll, according to Sen. Sergio Osmeña III.

They should talk "and iron out the differences and come to a *modus vivendi* so that they can present a united front to the pub-

lic," the senator said.

Osmeña conceded that a split opposition would be "very favorable" to the administration.

Sen. Robert Barbers said a four-way presidential race would be advantageous to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the standard-bearer of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats.

Blockbuster

In the House of Representatives, Manila Rep. Harry Angping expressed the hope that Poe and Lacson could still reunite the opposition forces and field a single "blockbuster ticket."

Angping said both Poe and Lacson had agreed that replacing the Macapagal administration through elections was far more important than their individual political interests.

Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos is rooting for Poe, whom she described as a "sure winner."

She said the opposition should choose Poe's running mate from among its ranks instead of inviting an outsider and risking bad feelings among its members.

This early, leftist groups are considering supporting Poe. Groups founded by the late labor leader Felimon "Ka Popoy" Lagman have "opened lines of communication" with the camp of Poe to "explore the possibility of support" for the popular actor.

"FPJ can easily identify with the masses and their plight, making him a very attractive candidate," Rep. JV Bautista (Sanlakas) said in a phone interview.

Bautista was speaking for both Sanlakas and the Partido ng

Mangagawa which were among the organizations set up by Lagman, a radical labor leader who operated mostly in Metro Manila starting in the 1970s until he was assassinated in 2001.

Lagman and his followers broke away from the mainstream Left in the early 1990s.

Not a traditional politician

Bautista, a human rights lawyer, noted that Poe "does not carry the baggage of traditional politics" and it is "encouraging that big names in traditional politics and business are not yet openly identified with FPJ."

"We hope he remains independent," Bautista said, recalling that Poe himself had said that if he ever decided to run, it would not be because politicians had pushed him into it.

Bautista's colleague, Rep. Renato Magtubo (Partido ng Mangagawa), earlier called on Poe to state his position on issues like workers' wages.

Personalities identified with the mainstream Left earlier said Poe could provide an alternative choice for voters next year.

Even Jose Ma. Sison, exiled founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines, said Poe might be the next President.

Bayan Muna, the party-list group identified with the mainstream Left, is set to hold its national convention in January, with the possibility of inviting as guest of honor its chosen presidential candidate, if the group decides to support one at all.

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Carlito Pablo and Cynthia D. Balana

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, December 9, 2003
2nd Week of Advent

1st Reading: Is 40:1-11
Gospel: Mt 18:12-14

"Jesus said to his disciples, 'What do you think of this? If someone has a hundred sheep and one of them strays, won't he leave the ninety-nine on the hillside, and go to look for the stray one? And I tell you: when he finally finds it, he is more pleased about it than about the ninety-nine that did not get lost. It is the same with your Father in heaven: there they don't want even one of these little ones to be lost.'"

Commentary

This is a dramatic healing of a paralyzed man. Not only did Jesus bring him back to health and happiness but also the forgiveness of his sins. Noteworthy is the manner in which the paralytic had come to face with Jesus through the top of the roof and letting him down. All these were made possible through the help of his friends. In a way, this episode is telling us that at times we need to allow our friends and companions to carry us even in the most unconventional ways. What is important is the letting go and letting God act in the most unexpected ways through people and events. Let us cast out our fears that paralyze our capacity for healing and wholeness.

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Gov't lawyers join clamor for stay of executions

From page A1

law," Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo said in Malacañang.

Romulo said his office had recommended that death convicts scheduled for execution be given reprieves, except for those involved in kidnapping and drug trafficking.

Ms Macapagal said Friday she would no longer stand in the way of executions scheduled by the courts from January 2004 amid a public outcry over a recent spate of kidnappings.

The surge in kidnappings, mostly targeting wealthy Chinese-Filipino families, had prompted that influential community to lobby for a reimposition of the death penalty as well as a stricter crackdown on kidnappers.

"This is an integral part of criminal justice that will be carried out as scheduled by the courts," the President's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a press statement on Tuesday.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales, who was in Malacañang to grace a special ceremony honor-

ing his predecessor, Jaime Cardinal Sin, said the Church would seek a reconsideration of Ms Macapagal's decision through proper channels.

A bit disappointed

Bro. Mike Velarde, leader of El Shaddai, said his religious group would side with the Church on the issue.

He admitted that he was "a little disappointed" with Ms Macapagal's decision because he was convinced it would not stem the rise in criminality.

"I would prefer to review the death penalty law. We already executed somebody under that law, but I feel nothing concrete came out of it. We should repeal the law and find a better way to effectively combat heinous crimes," Velarde said.

"There are some convicted persons that have been wrongly accused because our system is not perfect; there are a lot of fall guys that find themselves in a bad situation."

Velarde said the death penalty issue was not likely to affect the

outcome of the elections next year.

He said his group would reveal its choice of presidential candidate a month before the May balloting. Ms Macapagal would likely have the edge in the presidential race if the opposition were to field two or three candidates, he added.

After refusing to intervene in the lethal injection of seven convicts in early 2000, then President Joseph Estrada imposed a moratorium on executions amid pressure from the Church.

Ms Macapagal, who is opposed to the death penalty, also imposed a moratorium on executions after taking over the presidency from Estrada in January 2001. The Church and various human rights organizations applauded the decision.

Later that year, she bowed to public pressure and said convicted kidnappers could be put to death. No executions, however, have taken place since.

Bunye said the President had previously believed that a more effective solution than the death penalty

would be the strengthening of the prosecution and courts, improving the correctional system, the community and government relations.

But the recent spate of kidnappings and other crimes had led her to waive the ban on executions, he said.

Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, head of the House committee on human rights, and other groups said they suspected Ms Macapagal's decision was linked to the presidential election.

"It reflects on her hesitation or her inability to look at this as a question of policy. Is she out to please a particular sector?" Rosales asked, adding she would push for legislation to repeal the death penalty.

Abolished in 1987, capital punishment was reinstated in 1994 for heinous crimes, such as rape, kidnapping, murder and drug trafficking.

Amnesty International, a London-based group opposed to capital punishment, said in a report last year that it had "grave concerns about serious failings in the Philippine justice system."

With an AP report

METROBRIEFS

Killed in Manila

PENDA Domado on Sunday was dragged from his house in Manila and allegedly killed right on his doorstep by members of two families from Taguig. Police said Domado, 30, a businessman and resident of Marayog Street, Qulapo, Manila, was inside his house when several armed men, said to be members of the Panundi and Waham families, barged in and attacked him at around 8:30 p.m., said SP02 Edmundo Cabal. **Leila Salaverria**

Dueling butchers

TWO BUTCHERS—one armed with a kitchen knife, the other with a jungle bolo—staged a duel on Sunday, where the man with the smaller weapon was killed. A certain "Dodong" stabbed and killed Orlando Flores, 45, of Maginoo Street, Magsaysay Village, Tondo, said SP02 Danilo Vidad. Police said the two men fought it out at the Vitas Slaughterhouse in Tondo where they worked. **Leila Salaverria**

5 dead in Antipolo

FIVE persons were killed in two road accidents in Antipolo City last weekend. Police said Antonio Martinez, 48, and Milagros Cruz, 60, were killed Sunday morning when a jeepney hit the tricycle they were riding along Olalia Road, Barangay Sta. Cruz. At around 3:30 a.m. yesterday, Joselito Zarate, and two unidentified women were also killed when the tricycle they were riding in slammed a post in Barangay San Isidro. **Edgar Sembrano, trainee**

Pat on the back

OFFICIALS of Nokia and the American Chamber of Commerce yesterday gave the National Bureau of Investigation a pat in the back for confiscating counterfeit Nokia accessories worth about P100 million. The NBI's Intellectual Property Rights Division seized 300,000 pieces of fake Nokia batteries, chargers and other accessories worth P100 million in July and November this year. **Leila Salaverria**

APB X'mas party

THE ALPHA Phi Beta Chancery will hold its Christmas Party on Dec. 12, 6 p.m., at the Kalayaan 1 and 2-A, Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan. The event will be hosted by Sen. Bobby Barbers in coordination with Batch '63 Alphas. The Chancery is composed of alumni members of the Alpha Phi Beta Fraternity of the University of the Philippines, headed by Rene Valdecantos.

Most Filipinos favor death penalty

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's lifting of the moratorium on the enforcement of the death penalty is cheered not only by the Filipino-Chinese community but also by the entire nation.

Only pro-life advocates, who are few, and the Catholic Church are against it. The majority of Filipinos who are for the lifting of the death penalty have won.

It was high time the government resumed the execution of very bad people through the legal way.

Anyway, the government has been killing off criminals on the sly. People know this kind of extra-judicial execution of criminals as "salvaging."

It's hypocrisy of the highest order when a government announces that it is against capital punishment, but at the same time tolerates the execution of criminals by vigilante groups.

Ask Sen. Panfilo Lacson. He's the No. 1 advocate of capital punishment without going through the tedious legal process.

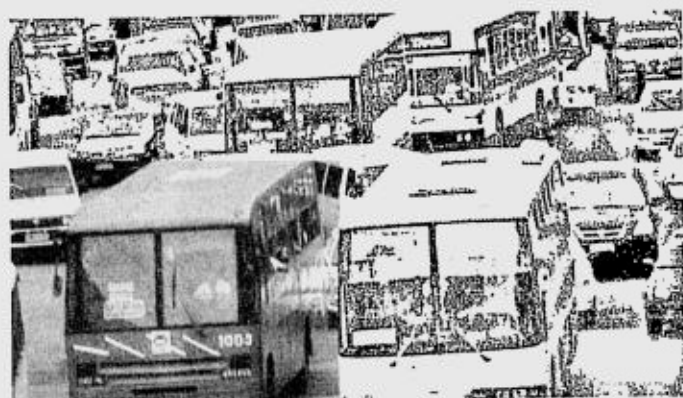
To Lacson, kidnappers, murderers, drug traffickers and rapists of minors are lowlives. They chose their own fate by doing what they did.

This columnist agrees with Lacson insofar as executing kidnappers, murderers, drug traffickers, rapists and bank robbers is concerned. But not in the execution of publicist Bubby Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, who were innocent. And, of course, in the killing of that innocent child who was pushed out of a flying helicopter.

But why does President

ORGANIZED BUS ROUTE

Kinks, chaos and promise on Day 1



THIS file photo shows how a typical day on Edsa goes. MMDA officials were hoping to clean up the traffic mess on Edsa when they cooked up the organized bus route scheme. **JOAN BONDORC**

By Margaux Ortiz

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority officials and bus operators yesterday described the Organized Bus Route's (OBR) first day of implementation as far from being perfect, but showing great promise.

"As expected, *magulo* (chaotic) but we will see to it that the scheme works for everyone this time," MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said in an interview.

Compared to the previous dry runs, Fernando said yesterday's test run was "encouraging" because bus operators and drivers were "very cooperative."

However, the MMDA had to suspend the distribution of bus queue cards because the drivers had not fully understood their use.

The queue cards are distributed to make sure the buses move in a single file on the yellow lane.

He said that although the drivers were allowed to overtake one another at some points, they should still line up at major loading areas like Guadalupe, Cubao, Megamall, Shaw, Boni, Ortigas and North Ave.

The MMDA chair stressed that the bus drivers must stay in line, or they pay the fine.

Later, the MMDA will assess the system and decide whether to scrap

it or continue implementing it.

Integrated Metro Bus Owners Association president Claire dela Fuente said they were satisfied with the MMDA's implementation of the scheme.

"We told our drivers to cooperate first before they complain," De la Fuente said. "The MMDA officials were very open to our suggestions on how to improve the system."

Dela Fuente said that aside from the drivers, the passengers should also obey the scheme.

"The passengers should also be penalized for encouraging the bus drivers to break the rules," she said.

Widow of suspected car thief claims torture

Tarra Quismundo

THE WIDOW of one of the suspected car thieves killed last week during an alleged shootout is now claiming that the police kidnapped, tortured and murdered her husband.

Lilibeth Oanes, wife Rodolfo Oanes, 40, of Gapan, Nueva Ecija, yesterday filed murder and kidnapping charges against Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, National Capital Region Police Office Director Ricardo de Leon, Western Police District Director Pedro Bulaong, and others unnamed before the City Prosecutor's Office of Manila.

"I filed the charges to spare (those) who may fall victim to... these butchers," Lilibeth said in her complaint.

The woman said that the remains of her husband, a floor manager at the Japlag KTV on Bocobo Street, Ermita, Manila, bore torture marks when she and relatives saw the body last Wednesday.

Members of the WPD Anti-Kidnapping Division and Special Weapons and Tactics units on Dec. 3 shot and killed Oanes, Cenendo Lannu, 53, of Nueva Vizcaya, Romeo delos Santos, 37, of Mandaluyong City, Geronimo Lopez, 43, of Nueva Ecija, Edgar Somido,

49, of Iloilo, and another unidentified suspect, along the President Sergio Osmeña Highway in Manila.

The lawmen had claimed that the suspects engaged them in a shootout.

Lilibeth said that while they were "restrained by the WPD to get copies of the autopsy report" on her husband, she had seen her husband's body and saw how both his hands and knees appeared to have been "crushed by a blunt object."

In her complaint, Lilibeth said that her husband had been missing since Nov. 29.

Bulaong, WPD director, said that he "welcomes" the complaint and is standing by his men.

Bulaong said his men were only doing their job when they shot and killed the six men who, based on evidence, were involved in kidnapping, robbery and car theft.

He said that what happened was a "running gun battle," citing the account of several witnesses.

As to the torture marks on Oanes' body, Bulaong said that he does not know how that came about.

Bulaong said that Oanes could have gotten the bruises when he jumped off the vehicle during the shootout.

Boy shot to death for picking mangoes

ROBERTO Alvarina, 14, on Sunday was shot and killed for picking mangoes in Manila.

Alvarina, of Antonio Street, Sta. Mesa, died of a gunshot wound in the head.

Investigation by SP02 Edmundo Cabal said that the suspect, Landcom Village security guard Bienvenido Francisco, scolded Alvarina when he caught the boy climbing a mango tree in front of a house on Martes Street at around 10 a.m. on Sunday.

When Alvarina tried to shake off Francisco, who had gotten hold of the teenager, the guard lost his temper, pulled out his firearm and shot Alvarina in the head.

Francisco managed to escape, Cabal said.

Leila Salaverria

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

POLICE CHECKPOINTS

GMA: Uphold rights

By Gil Cabacungan, Edson Tandoc Jr. and Tina Santos

STILL on the warpath, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday stressed that the "law enforcers will strictly implement their mandate" to restore order in the streets.

"(The authorities) have been apprised of clear rules of engagements," said the President, who also ordered the police in the suburbs to be on guard for criminals trying to elude the dragnet in the metropolis.

The President assured that civilian rights would be upheld, but that "armed persons or groups that dare and resist the authorities shall be engaged."

The police yesterday set up at least 11 checkpoints—or stationary police outposts—all over the metropolis.

Aside from the checkpoints, 21 mobile checkpoints have also been set up in several key areas.

The National Capital Region Police Office has committed 10,000 lawmen—augmented

by about 1,000 men from the Army and the Marines—to secure the outposts.

The Filipino-Chinese community has adopted a wait-and-see attitude on whether the road blocks would deter kidnappings and other crimes.

"We hope the plans (of the police) would not remain as plans but produce results," Teresita Ang-See, chair of the Citizens' Action Against Crime, told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Ang-See, reacting to the recent police breakthroughs in crime prevention and arrests, said that she is hoping the conduct of the enforcers would not be a "ningas-cogon" thing—a short-lived exercise in diligence.

Policemen manning a checkpoint in Quezon City on Sunday night got the scare of their lives when Abenezar Laurente, 27, lobbed a grenade at their outpost on Gen. Luis Street, Nagkaisang Nayon, Novaliches.

The grenade, with its pin still intact, did not explode, police said.

Laurente, of Bacoor, Cavite, was immediately arrested.



PRRT! FOUL!

Western Police District lawmen led by Supt. Manolo Martinez (left) seem unaware of the 'No Frisking' rule ordered by NCRPO chief Ricardo de Leon as they question a motorist at a checkpoint along España in Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

Prosecutors seek go-ahead of Joey's case

By Armand N. Nocom

GOVERNMENT prosecutors asked the Sandiganbayan yesterday to proceed with the arraignment of Parañaque City Mayor Joey Marquez, saying that an unresolved appeal before the Commission on Audit (COA) does not stop the Ombudsman from hailing to court government officials.

The anti-graft court earlier deferred the Nov. 28 arraignment of the actor-comedian after his lawyers pointed to a pending appeal before COA relative to its report that there was a P1.3 million overprice in the acquisition of ammunition for Marquez's bodyguards.

In a five-page comment, Special Prosecutor Cornelio Somido said the request of Marquez for deferment of the arraignment pending the resolution of COA appeal "must be denied for lack of merit."

Somido argued that results of COA findings "would not alter the findings of the Ombudsman that there exists probable cause to warrant his prosecution."

The prosecutor pointed out that past rulings of the Supreme Court had upheld this view.

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Investigating corruption requires skills, patience, and a nose for wrongdoing. This manual is intended to make the task less daunting and to provide a map for those who are embarking on the effort. It is hard to navigate blindly the corridors of power and malfeasance. This book was written with the certainty that with a manual such as this, even first-timers can take on the task.

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At the same time, the book tries to provide more depth by analyzing how various officials and agencies have exercised—even abused—their powers in the past. It shows how rules and procedures have been bent, mangled, or ignored, and pinpoints what citizens should watch out for, where the potential for abuse and malfeasance occur.



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ALLEGED BIAS IN ASSIGNMENTS

Non-PMayers in PNP jolt Napolcom

By Margaux Ortiz

THE NATIONAL Police Commission (Napolcom) jumped to its feet after a group of police officers issued a manifesto decrying alleged bias in the Philippine National Police (PNP).

The statement of the Police ROTC Graduates for Integrity, Morality and Order (Primo), which was published in major newspapers over the weekend, prompted the Napolcom to call an emergency meeting yesterday.

Linda Malenab-Hornilla, Napolcom officer in charge, said she wanted to have a dialogue with the Primo members.

Director Lucas Managuelod, Chief Supt. Marcelo Ele Jr. and Chief Supt. Delfin Genio were among the Primo officers who attended the hour-long meeting.

Hornilla and other Napolcom officials heard the complaints and grievances of the group composed of

police officers who are non-alumni of the Philippine Military Academy.

She, however, declined comment on what transpired, saying the Napolcom still had to talk to the group representing the PMA alumni in the PNP.

Only then could they take action. "I promised to give their list of grievances to the PNP Reform Commission but we still need more information to help bring this matter to a close," Hornilla said.

Hornilla set a meeting today with Primo and PMA alumni officers in an effort to resolve the issue.

In their manifesto addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo, Primo members complained of alleged monopoly and corruption in the PNP.

They claimed that only PMA alumni were being given opportunities to take top positions in the PNP, "despite [the Primo members] ranks and qualifications and outstanding credentials and track records."

The alleged favoritism, according to the officers who finished the Reserved Officers Training Course, has prevented them from advancing in their careers.

"The blessed children of heaven have it all," the Primo manifesto said.

It added, "Look at the distribution of key positions in the PNP today. It looks like pork barrel—from the PNP chief to the Command Group and Directorial Staff down to the Police Regional Offices. *Sila lang ba ang PNP* (Are they the only ones in the PNP)?"

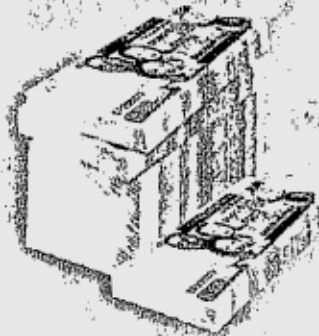
Animosity between PMA and non-PMA alumni in the police force was born with the creation of the PNP in the early '90s.

It can be recalled that the PNP was formed with the merging of the then Philippine Constabulary and the Integrated National Police.

Since then, non-PMA officers have complained of being treated as "second class" members of the PNP.

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FILIPINA Myrna Pabilore (right) parries a punch by Indonesia's Jenny Zeanet in a losing stand in the final of the 53-kg event in karate. AP

Brilliant move by Villamayor

By Roy Luarca

HO CHI MINH—Grandmaster Bong Villamayor let his frustration out and Philippine chess benefited Sunday night.

Offered a draw by Vietnamese GM Tu Hoang Thong, Villamayor declined and persevered to extract the victory that forged a playoff for the men's team rapid gold medal. Both teams ended up tied, 2-2, in regulation play at the Van Don Hall here.

Had Villamayor agreed, the 22nd Southeast Asian Games' men's team rapid title would have slipped off the Filipinos' hand.

"I was unaware until later how



22nd SEA GAMES

critical my match was. No one told me how my teammates were doing," said Villamayor, an Airman Second Class and father of three.

Given a new lease on life, the Filipinos went on to trounce the Vietnamese, 3-1, in blitz play, with Villamayor again pulling off a win.

GM-candidate Mark Paragua also prevailed, and so did International Master Jayson Gonzales,

who relieved Eugene Torre after Asia's first GM was beaten by Dao, the region's highest-rated player in regular play.

Dao also beat GM Joey Antonio, who took over board 1 from Torre, for Vietnam's lone point.

"This was a team effort, but somehow I feel vindicated by my performance in this event," said Villamayor, a five-time Olympian.

The 38-year-old Villamayor was supposed to play in the individual rapid, being the reigning Shell national rapid titlist. But he yielded the slot to Paragua, who went on to win chess' first gold.

Villamayor just wanted to make it clear. He, too, is a hero.



VILLAMAYOR: Heroic win

RP SCHEDULE

November 9, 2003 (Tuesday)

HANOI

(National Aquatic Sports Complex)

All Heats

9 a.m.—50m Freestyle, M (Lambert Guiriba, Mark Dave Kalaw)
200m Breaststroke, W (Jenny Guerrero),
200m Breaststroke, M (Raphael Chua, Miguel Molina), 200m Freestyle, W (Lizza Danila, Marichi Gandionco)
1500 Freestyle, M (Juan Miguel Mendoza, Juan Carlo Piccio)
4x100 Medley Relay, W (Luica Dacanay, Marichi Gandionco, Jenny Guerrero, Lizza Danila, Jeldi Gem Ong)
8 p.m.—Finals
(Note: RP schedule depends on heat results)

Diving

(National Aquatic Sports Complex)
Synchronized Platform, M (Jaime Asok, Ryan Fabriga), W (Cesell Domestios, Sheila Mae Perez)
Synchronized Springboard, M (Nino Carog), W (Cesell Domestios, Sheila Mae Perez)

Canoing

(West Lake)

Finals
9:20 a.m. 1000C1, M (Carmelito Decasin)
9:40 a.m. 1000C1, W (April Mae Panalosa)
10 a.m. 1000K2, M (Jonard Saren, Ronald Ylanan)

Cycling

(Hao Binh)
9 a.m. 90km Mass Start, W (Lakambini Alto, Ann Karina de Leon, Marita del Rosario, Katherine Lopez)

Gymnastics

(Hanoi Sports Palace)
Rhythmic (Ms. Angelica Basco, Maria Carla Mamorno, Maria G. Ty)

Pencak Silat

(Sports Gymnasium of Police Academy)
8 a.m.—Class E, M (Edwin Simacon vs Abdulkarim Ibrahim, Indonesia)
Class H, M Neil John Ballos vs Abdel Rahman, Singapore
8 p.m.—Tunggul, W Ganda Double, M Regu, M (Finals)

Shooting

(National Shooting Range)
9 a.m.—Men's 10m Air Rifle 60 shots (Roberto Bote Jr., Emerito Concepcion, Daryl Sandoval)
Men's Trap (Eric Ang, Jethro Dionisio, Jaime Recio)

Sepak Takraw

(Hai Ba Trung Competition Hall)
9 a.m. Philippines vs Vietnam (Women's Team Event)
12 noon Philippines vs Indonesia (Men's Team Event)

Volleyball

(Nam Dinh-Ninh Binh)
6 p.m. Philippines vs Singapore (W)

Wrestling

(Ha Tay Competition Hall)
9 a.m.—Violetto Agustin vs Rudiasy Ah, Indonesia (48 kg), Marciano Basso vs Chaiat Jungun, Thailand (84 kg), Marcus Valda vs Nanang Sibro, Indonesia (96 kg), Margarito Angana vs Nguyen The Hai, Vietnam (51 kg)

HO CHI MINH

Tennis

(Lan Anh Club)
9 a.m. Individual Events (M, W) Johny Arcilla, Czarina Mae Arevalo, Anna Patricia Santos

Chess

(Van Don Stadium)
9 a.m. Standard (M) Rogelio Antonio Jr., Ronald Dabao, Mark Paragua, Eugene Torre, Buenaventura Villamayor, (W) Arlene Caci, Kathryn Ann Cruz, Sheela Joy Lomibao, Christine Mariano, Beverly Mendoza

Billiards/Snooker

(Nguyen Du Sports Center)
10 a.m.—9-Ball Pool Singles, Semifinals/Finals (RP schedule depends on earlier round)

Basketball

(Military Gymnasium)
2:30 p.m. Malaysia vs Philippines (W)
4:30 p.m. Vietnam vs Philippines (M)

Tracksters capture 3 more golds for RP

By Ernesto Gonzales

HANOI—Rookie Rene Herrera, taking over from Eduardo Buenavista, struck in the 3,000-meter steeplechase to highlight a hat-trick of Philippine victories in athletics Monday in the 22nd Southeast Asian Games.

Ernie Candelario and Jimar Aing finished 1-2 in the men's 400-m finals and John Lozada topped the men's 1,500m as the track and field bets raised the country's gold harvest to 14 halfway through the athletics program.

With Buenavista physically drained by his overpowering win in the 10,000m Sunday, Herrera took care of business efficiently, storming away from his two rivals in the last lap to finish unchallenged in eight minutes 50.78 seconds.

Candelario earlier retained his men's 400-m title in 3:47.02 with Aing rallying in the last few meters to nip Thailand's Narong Nilploy for the silver medal in 3:47.23.

Both Candelario and Aing are mainstays of the 4x400-m relay team that now seems a surefire bet for a gold based on their performances.

Lozada, the defending 800m champion, improved on his silver finish in Malaysia two years ago by taking the 1,500 gold in 3:56.79.

The 30-year-old Lozada, a father of three from Calinog, Iloilo, took the lead going into the last 200m and was never headed.

Joebert Delicano added a bronze in the men's triple jump with a leap of 14.94m, matching his finish in



CANDELARIO (303) prepares to move out front with Aing (302) in the 400m final in Hanoi's Main Sports Stadium.

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the Malaysia SEAG.

With four golds, the athletics squad of Go Teng Kok is well on the way to upholding its status as the No. 1 gold medal-machine of the Philippine delegation.

After a rest day Tuesday, Lerma Bulautan-Gabito tries to clinch the

women's long jump on Wednesday with Buenavista set to return on Thursday looking to score in the 5,000m again.

Also scheduled Thursday is Lozada in the 800 finals.

Buenavista, who pulled off a 3,000 steeplechase-5,000 double

two years ago in Malaysia, was reduced to fourth in the steeplechase this time, clocking 9:06.32.

Herrera, a worthy steeplechase backup for Buenavista after placing fourth in the last Asian championship in Manila last September, showed his time was up as he left his two rivals eating his dust in the last 200m.

The 5-foot-4 Guimaras native raised both his hands as he hit the finish and shed tears of victory as he saluted the small Filipino crowd in the stands.

But Sean Guevarra, silver medalist in Malaysia in 2001, settled for fourth in the men's high jump in 2.05m, and Narcisa Atienza, trying to fill the shoes of the retired heptathlon queen Elma Muros-Posadas, finished fourth and last after a dismal 800-m run.

Tañamor, 5 other pugs gain finals

By Roy Luarca

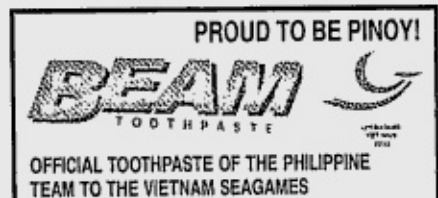
HO CHI MINH—And then there are six Filipino boxers left to search for the gold.

Lightflyweight Harry Tañamor, bantam Joan Tipon and welter Florencio Ferrer hurdled their foes last night to barge into the finals of the 22nd Southeast Asian Games boxing competitions at the Phan Dinh Phung Stadium here.

Tañamor flaunted his superiority over Thai Suban Pannon en route to a 24-13 decision while Tipon showed maturity beyond his years to trounce Indon Urias Arenaldo Moniaggaia, 20-7.

Fired up, Ferrer also cruised to a 21-10 victory over another Indon, Marwan Muling, to the delight of a big group of flag-waving Filipinos.

They joined pinweight Juanito Magliuan featherweight Roel Laguna and light welter Ja-



son Melligan in the finals set Wednesday night.

The competitions take a break Tuesday. Adapting a wily hit-and-run tactic, Tañamor repeated over his victim in the Busan Asian Games where he took the silver medal.

"This is a good break for us. Let's hope this continues in the finals," said Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines.

The perfect solution

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



allows a team to field in 7 players with two of them as alternates, was such that there was a total of 800 players this year. Organizers had tried hard to rein in the overflow teams and, to a certain extent, were successful. For the record, nine teams had been refused entry. The moguls of the tournament, like BCC general manager Anthony de Leon, had suddenly made enemies due to their decisive stance to say no to teams pleading to be admitted.

But still, given the huge volume of

THE EIGHT aces scored in the recent 54th Fil-Am Golf Invitational was a record. The previous best was six in 2001.

That could only mean one thing: God's love for the Fil-Am hasn't waned one teeny-weeny bit. As I have always said, only God makes holes-in-one for us.

God even showed His fairness this time: He equally divided all eight aces at Baguio Country Club and Camp John Hay.

The four ace makers at BCC were Inoc Laranang of Sustagen Premium 2 (13th hole, Dec. 1), Floyd dela Cruz of Isabela GC (10th hole, Dec. 3), Virgilio Biscocho of Paga Guam (12th hole, Dec. 3) and Richard Solang of Early Birds 1 (18th hole, Dec. 6).

Scoring their aces at CJH were James Nakamura of Hui-O-Hawaii (15th hole, Dec. 3), Eddie Jose of BMG Solar (6th hole, Dec. 3), Nestor Manrique of Fil-Am

at Diego (13th hole, Dec. 5) and Lester Majarcon of Pines Golf of California (11th hole, Dec. 6).

A round-trip ticket to Paris from Eva Air went to the raffle winner among the four ace makers at BCC and another similar ticket to London to the raffle winner among the four ace makers at CJH. Nanette Filler of the Fil-Am tournament committee decided on the raffle to break the tie according to the rules.

But the record number of aces was just one of the highlights of the tournament recognized as the world's biggest amateur golf tournament by the Guinness Book of World Records.

This year alone, there were a record 73 teams fielding two sets of crews for both the Fil and Am divisions. Each division has seven brackets—Championship and Classes A, B, C, D, E and F.

The bigness of the tournament, which

players, the gripes here and there were as unavoidable as rains in August that organizers couldn't help but absorb some criticisms, especially when some flights got stranded due to darkness.

Organizers, including top officials from both BCC and CJH, are now one in saying a solution to the perennial problem of overflow teams has been found, which is that the Fil-Am Seniors will be introduced next year.

"I think that's the best solution to the problem," said Federico R. Agcaoli, the president of BCC, a stand that was strongly endorsed by CJH chairman Bob Sobrepena.

Said Agcaoli: "With the Fil-Am Seniors coming into play next year, we could expand the tournament to two weeks, which should give everybody all the elbow room to enjoy their stay in our beloved City of Baguio."

Said Sobrepena: "To make the participants' stay truly enjoyable, I will strongly propose the holding of nightly socials, with big-name entertainers doing performances for our players. Baguio is golf to Fil-Am participants but more importantly, it is also a place of leisure, fun and relaxation."

Well said. The tournament committee, particularly those having a direct hand at running the event when competition is on, sees the two-week schedule as, in the words of Anthony de Leon, "the perfect solution." Taby Tabaniag, chair of the Committee that has also under it the rules committee, approves of it 100 percent.

I can only applaud. I saw pain etched in Taby's face each time he saw players fail to finish their round due to darkness. Hopefully next year, that pout in Taby's 84-year-old lips will turn into a smile.

Eala defers decision on Torion plea

By June Navarro

PBA Commissioner Noli Eala has deferred for next year a decision on the appeal of Jimwell Torion to shorten his eight-month suspension.

Eala's decision immediately drew criticism from the Red Bull Barako management which has lobbied on behalf of its playmaker who they said was unfairly punished by the league.

An infuriated team manager Tony Chua described as "uncalled for" Eala's decision to put Torion's appeal in the backburner.

He pointed out that San Miguel Beer forward Danny Idefonso got away with a "light" punishment—one-game suspension and P30,000 fine—for punching Coca-Cola import Tee McClary in Game 2 of the ongoing championship series.

Torion was fined P70,000 and suspended eight months for a hard foul that broke the nose of Talk 'N Text's Jimmy Alapag during the two teams' recent match.

"It's his prerogative (to delay the appeal) but I don't agree with the way he handles it. I find it very unfair not only to Jimwell but to the entire Red Bull management as well," Chua told the *Inquirer*.

Eala explained he still has to review the case before acting on the request of Red Bull to ease the suspension—believed to be the harshest in league history.

"I don't want to rush this

one because I'm studying it carefully," said Eala.

In another development, swingman Junthly Valenzuela has signed a fresh two-year contract with the Barakos, making the 6-foot-2 slasher the first of 59 players with expiring contracts to renew ties with their ballclubs.

Chua declined to reveal the financial terms of Valenzuela's contract.

Other players with expiring contracts: Barangay Ginebra's Rob Johnson, Elmer Lago, Gilbert Malabanan, Chester Tolomia; Sta. Lucia Realty's Jo-Mar Tierra, Rafael Santos, Jason Webb, Allan Yu and Francis Adriano; Shell's Rensy Bajar, Edwin Bacani, Frederick Canlas, Rainier Sisoy; Talk 'N Text's Angelo David, Patrick Fria, Norman Gonzales, Felix Belano, Chris Nicdao and Jojo Manalo; Red Bull's Edmund Reyes, Willie Miller, Vince Hizon, Lordy Tugade, Cyrus Baguio; Purefoods' Richard Yee, Rey Evangelista, Gilbert Demape, Alvin Patrimonio; Alaska's Jon Ordonio, Stephen Padilla, John Arigo, Ali Peek, Miguel Noble, Richard Del Rosario and Alvin Castro; Coca-Cola's Rafi Reavis, Rob Wainwright, Gec Chia, Gilbert Lao, Leo Avenida, William Antonio, Rudy Hatfield and Freddie Abuda; FedEx's Marvin Ortiguerra, Egay Bilonas, Wynne Arboleda, Jerry Codinera, Danilo Capobres; San Miguel Beer's Dorian Pena, Emmanuel Victoria, Arnold Calo, Bryan Gahol, Billy Moody, Joey Mente, Arnold Gamboa, Danny Idefonso, Benjie Paras, Anton Viloria.

1ST ROUND KO

Mayol wins OPBF crown

By Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

FUKUOKA, Japan—In a dazzling display of power boxing, Cebuano phenom Rodel Mayol dethroned OPBF minifyweight champion Genki Ohnaka via a first round knockout at the Tokuyama University Gymnasium here.

The 22-year-old Mayol, fighting out of the Stonewall Boxing Gym of Cebu, unleashed several hard punches on the lanky champion, capped with a left hook-right straight combination to stop Ohnaka in 2:49 of the opening round.

Referee David Chung of South Korea waved to stop Mayol from further battering Ohnaka, who crashed to the canvas unconscious.

"I would like to dedicate this win to my chief

supporter, Terry Carter as my birthday gift to him, and to my wife and son, to my parents and manager Joy Ouano, and all the Mandauehanons who have always stood by me," said Mayol.

The win boosted the Mandaue City-raised Mayol's record to 15 wins with 12 KOs against no loss.

Roligon's Spencer derby up

BIGTIME cockers are seeing action in Roligon Mega Cockpit's Spencer 4-Cock Derby starting at 7 p.m. tonight with 50 fast-paced encounters. Invited by derby hosts William Co, Wimer Ting and Jaime Vengzon are prominent cockers like Rudy Salud, Vice Mayor Nestor Mercado, Blandy Tolentino, Gerry Ramos, Pol Estrellado, Boy Rojo, Madison Go, Raymond Velayo, Gov. Ito Ynares and Eric dela Rosa, among others.



JOEY Mente of SMB gets sandwiched between Rob Wainwright (left) and Tee McClary of Coke during their game Sunday night. The Tigers prevailed, 87-84, to tie the series at 2-2.

Blitz meets glitz in PBA awards

THE BEST of two worlds meet to make for one star-studded evening when the Philippine Basketball Association holds its annual awards night on Dec. 15 at the Music Museum in Greenhills, San Juan.

In honoring its best and finest for the 2003 season, the league has prepared a special show that will bring together basketball stars and show biz celebrities in a unique setting aptly billed "Blitz Meets Glitz."

"This is one rare time when our annual awards will be held separately from the games—it will be a show all

its own," said Commissioner Noli Eala.

Serving as highlight of the affair, which will now be known as the "Leo Awards," in honor of the PBA founding commissioner Leo Prieto, is the awarding of the league's Most Valuable Player trophy, the Rookie of the Year plum and other awards, including the Gawad Emerson Coseteng citation.

Viva hotbabes Gwen Garci, Jen Rosendahl, Andrea del Rosario and Katya Santos will add glitter to the affair that will feature several special numbers.

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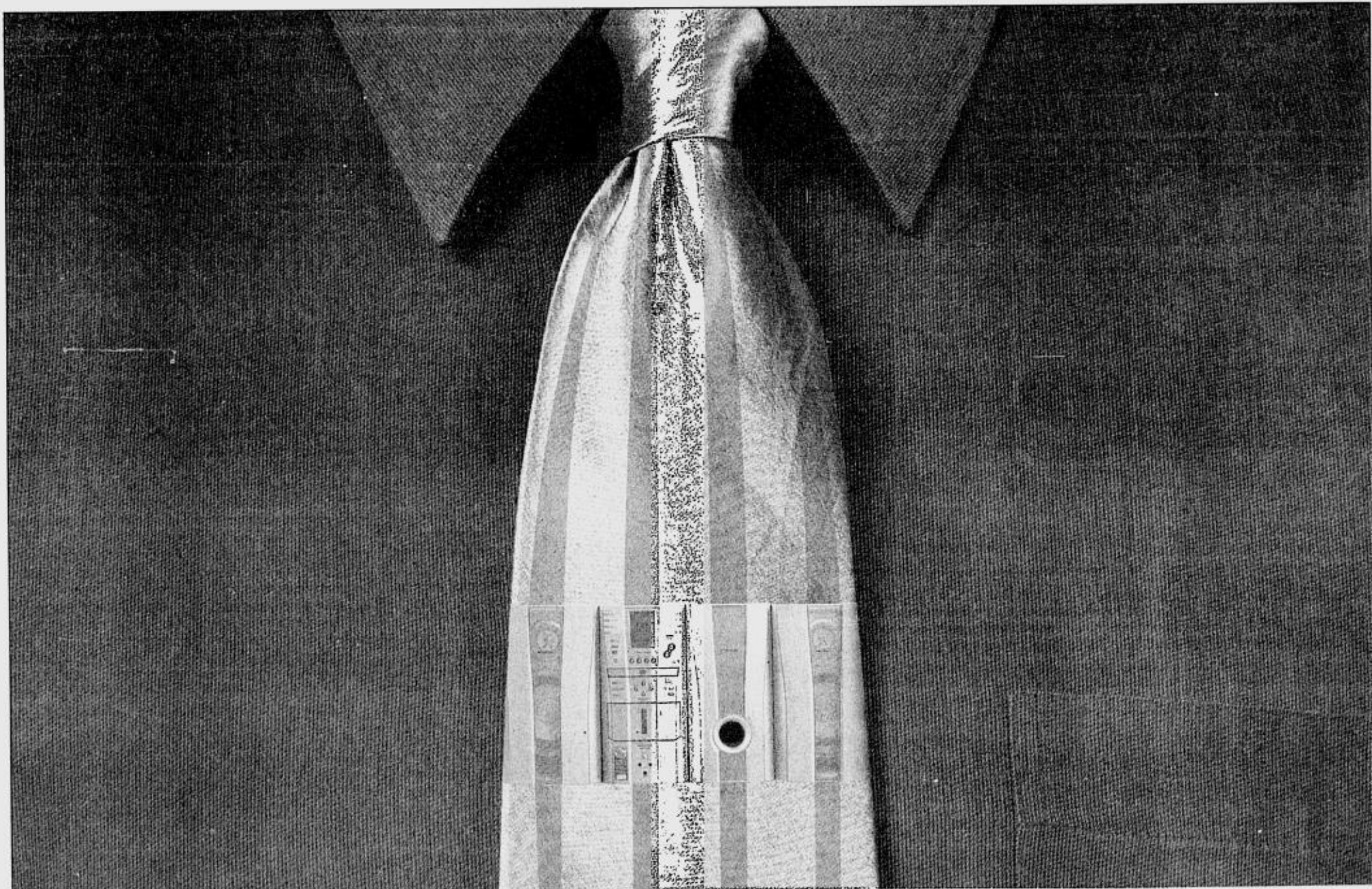
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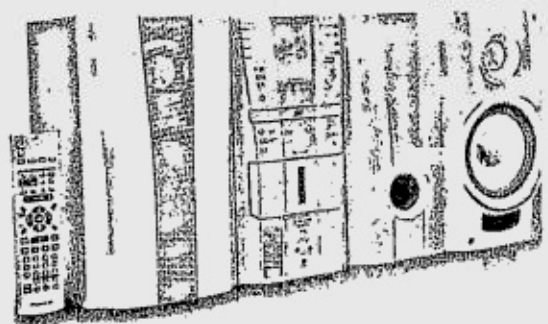
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EV31DVD

Raptors score again; George lifts Lakers

TORONTO—Vince Carter poured in 30 points and rookie Chris Bosh added 22 points and a career-high 16 rebounds to guide the Toronto Raptors to a 108-98 win over the Seattle Supersonics Sunday, their fourth straight victory.

The Raptors (12-8) are now a season-best four games over .500 and have not lost since making a six-player deal with the Chicago Bulls a week ago.

Jalen Rose, who came to the Raptors in the deal along with Donyell Marshall and Lonny Baxter in exchange for Antonio Davis, Jerome Williams and Chris Jefferies, had 18 points and 10 assists Sunday.

The Raptors were the lowest-scoring team in the NBA before the deal but have increased their output dramatically since the new players arrived, going 4-0.

In Memphis, Bonzi Wells picked up 16 points against his former team to help the Grizzlies to a 93-79 triumph over the Portland Trail Blazers.

Paul Gasol scored 17 points and pulled in 12 rebounds while Mike Miller also notched 17 points for the Grizzlies.

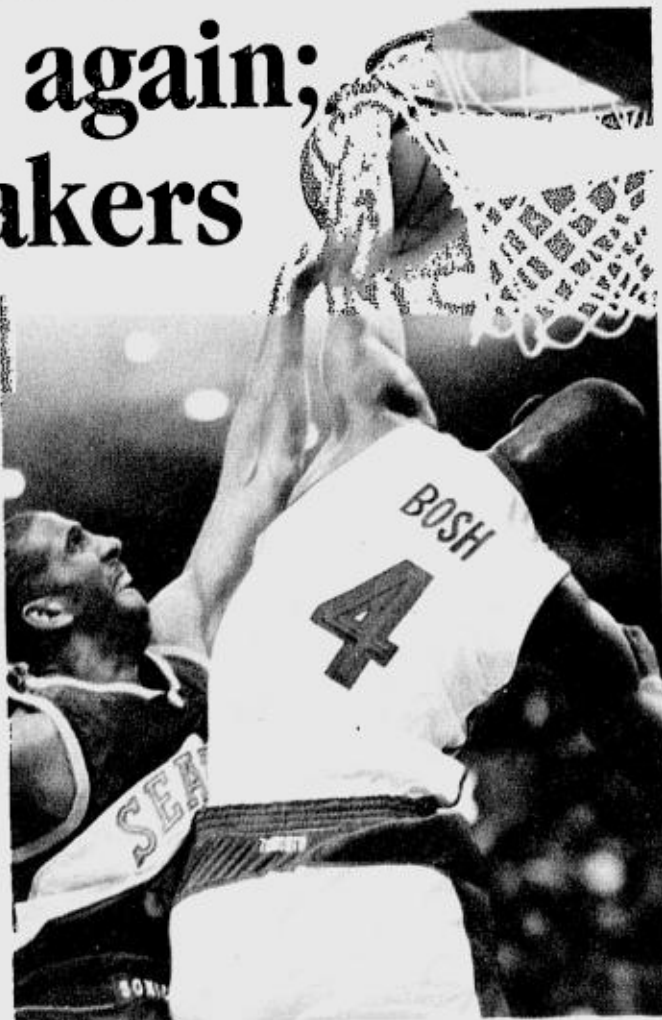
In Los Angeles, Devean George notched 16 points, including a game-winning three-pointer with 27 seconds left, to hand the Lakers a 94-92 triumph over the Utah Jazz.

Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant both had 19 points and O'Neal added 15 rebounds for the Lakers, who stretched their winning streak to nine games.

Maurice Williams scored 16 points for the Jazz, with DeShawn Stevenson adding 13 and Aleksandar Pavlovic 12.

Meanwhile, Dallas Mavericks outspoken owner Mark Cuban has been fined \$100,000 by the NBA for criticizing officials, a newspaper reported. *Reuters, AP*

Complete results:
Minnesota 96, LA Clippers 94; Memphis 93, Portland 79; Toronto 108, Seattle 98; Boston 116, Denver 111; Sacramento 91, Indiana 88; LA Lakers 94, Utah 92.



TORONTO Raptors center Chris Bosh blocks Seattle Supersonics forward Calvin Booth. The Raptors won, 108-98. *REUTERS*

RP banks on young squad in aquathlon

A YOUNG but determined team will carry the load for the Philippines when it aims for the top 3 places in the Speedo Asian Aquathlon Championships on Dec. 13 in Boracay.

Head coach Raul Cuevas said the local squad will be composed of young athletes like LC Langit and Josephine Pilapil, who are both high school swimmers from UST; Eldy Bautista and veteran Mylene Jarina from Cebu, former national age group champion Noel Salvador, and Ian Rusiana from Dumaguete.

The country's top bets like Mark Candelaria is injured, Sandra Araullo is in Australia for the World Championships, and Ani de Leon, Kaye Lopez and Bing Alito are all competing in the ongoing Vietnam SEA Games.

Other countries expected to participate in this event backed by the Pearl of the Pacific, Nike, Fuji Film, Gatorade, David's Salon/Spa, Powerbar, Corporate Air, Mobile Media, Mirror Magazine and PSC are Singapore and South Korea, according to TRAP president Tom Carrasco.

The three-day event, which coincides with the 2nd Boracay Multi Sports festival, will also see side events like the Speedo open water swim, Nike trail run, Fuji mountain bike race, the Nike ultimate frisbee, and an on-the-spot photo contest sponsored by Fuji Film, added Nino Sinco of the organizing Alternative Events Group, in partnership with the Cyclone Mountain Bike Club of Boracay.

Matsui to Mets for \$23M

TOKYO—Japanese baseball star Kazuo Matsui said Monday he has agreed to join the New York Mets for three years in a deal estimated to be worth \$23 million.

"The New York Mets have consistently demonstrated their genuine interest in me, and I

appreciate that," the 28-year-old free-agent infielder, known as "Little" Matsui or Kazu Matsui, told a press conference.

He said he was leaving for New York later Monday for a medical examination, to officially sign the deal and for a press conference there. *AFP*

Focus

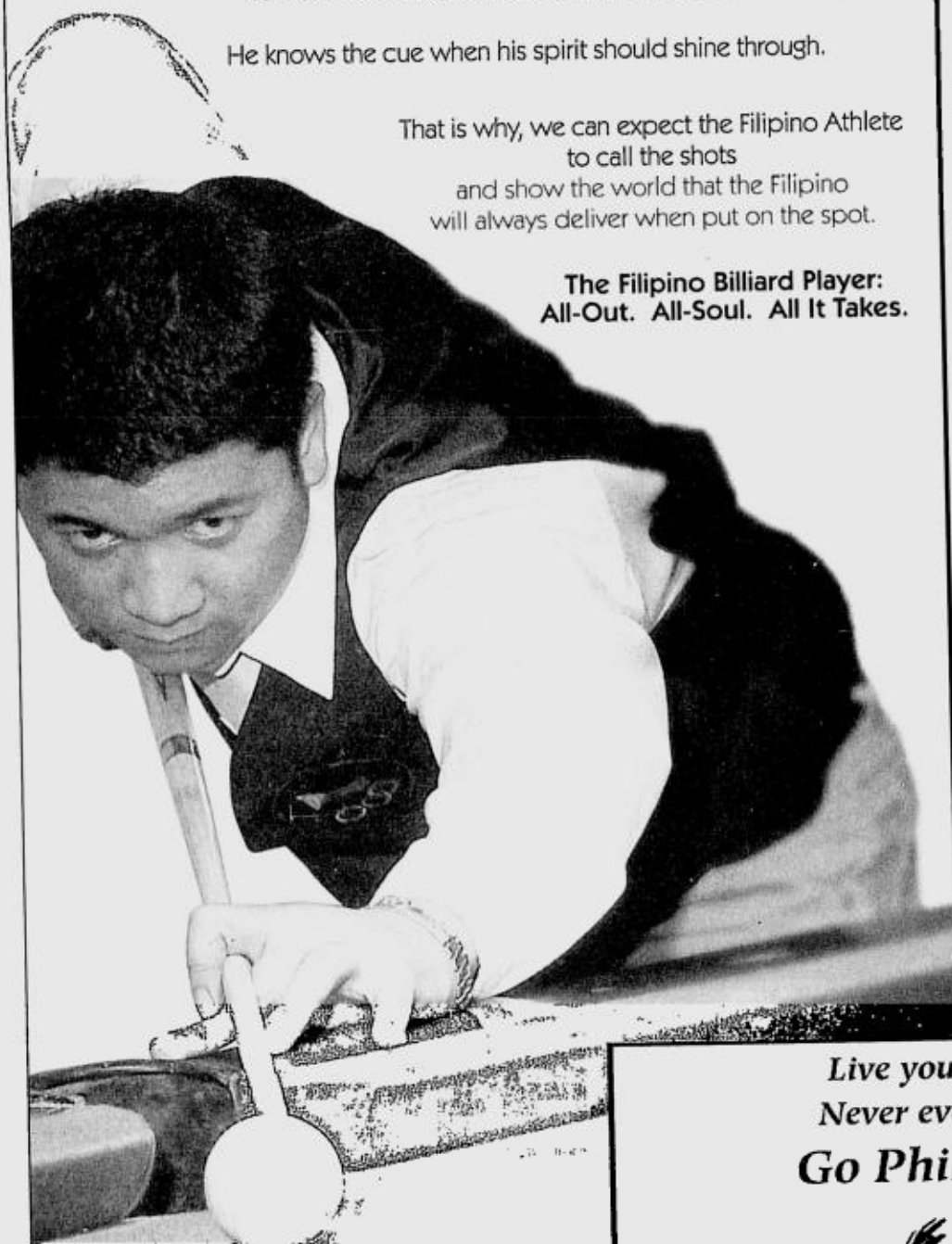
The moment he conceives, the Filipino achieves.

Even if he has to start from scratch, he make the most out of every break that comes his way.

He knows the cue when his spirit should shine through.

That is why, we can expect the Filipino Athlete to call the shots and show the world that the Filipino will always deliver when put on the spot.

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All-Out. All-Soul. All It Takes.



Power

When the stage is set, the Filipino is out to score success.

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The Volleyball Player:
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Live your dreams.
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22nd SEA GAMES
VIET NAM
2003

A message of support
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from:

The Philippine Olympic Committee and The Philippine Daily Inquirer

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Producers:

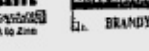
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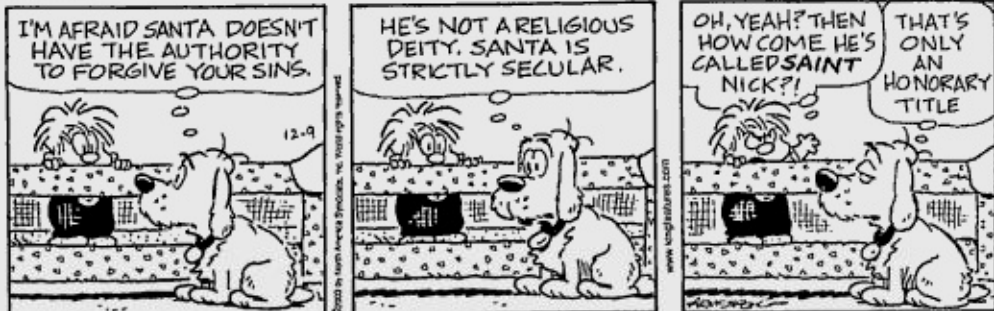


MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

PUGAD BABOY

BY RM. JUNIOR

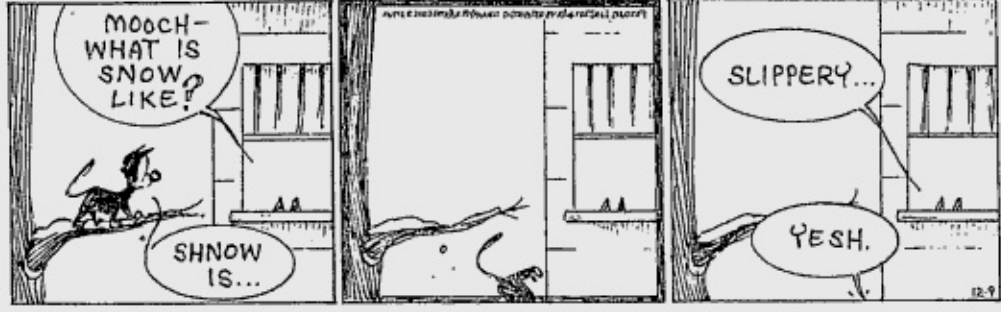


BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have explosive, fiery energy. Others immediately sense your intensity and zest for life. You want your world to be full of romantic adventure and derring-do. You're very protective of your loved ones. Your imagination is limitless. This year important aspects of your life will wind up in order to create space for new ones to begin.

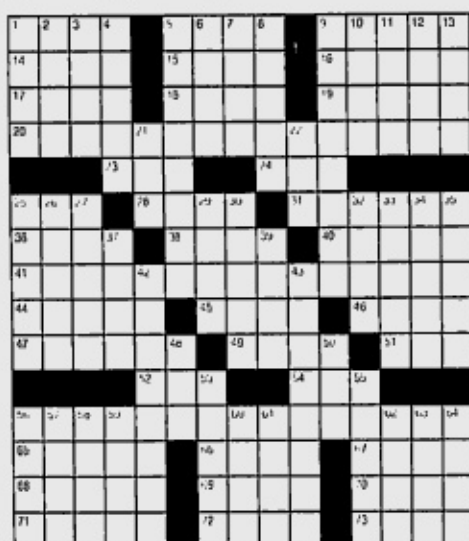
Birthdate of: Douglas Fairbanks Jr., actor; Kirk Douglas, producer/actor/ writer; John Malkovich, actor.

- ARIES (March 21 to April 19):** Today feels better if for no other reason than the fact that the Full Moon is now behind you. There is always a lessening or diminishing of energy after a Full Moon peaks.
- TAURUS (April 20 to May 20):** Today you can make better sense out of your life. Be patient in the morning and expect surprises in the afternoon. Nothing major—small stuff.
- GEMINI (May 21 to June 20):** You might have success in settling matters with a partner or close friend today. Things came to a head yesterday; now it's time to resolve these matters once and for all.
- CANCER (June 21 to July 22):** Things pick up nicely at work today. You now have a sense that there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and thank heavens it's not a train.
- LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22):** Go back and re-work some of your ideas that you had for working with children or promoting an artistic project. Romantic tension begins to subside.
- VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22):** The pressures you felt yesterday are now reduced. This means you can freely focus your energy on home and family matters. Talk to a parent to get added input.
- LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22):** Your desire to express yourself bubbles over today. You've got something to say, so you might as well say it. Don't worry about pleasing everyone—your feelings count too.
- SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21):** Your financial picture seems to look better today! However, wait until Thursday to do anything important. (Today has a hit-or-miss quality to it, depending on the hour.)
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21):** Tension with partners subsides today. You feel that others are ready to listen to you now. (If you have to eat humble pie, use lots of whipped cream.)
- CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19):** Step forth and state your wishes to others today. You'll be surprised at how receptive people are to hear what you have to say. (Trust me.)
- AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18):** Call up a friend to share some good times and enjoyable conversation over lunch, coffee, whatever. You need stimulating company today.
- PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20):** Things are definitely changing in your life, because Mars is finally on the move. What is normally a seven-week transit has been almost six months! Aaggh.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Pianist Myra
- Actor Dillon
- Wound marks
- Issue forth
- Arthur of tennis
- Cold-blooded
- Anger
- Suffix for diseases
- Diameter halves
- Peter, Paul & Mary hit
- "My Gal" —
- Viewed
- Plane ride; abbr.
- Rest periods
- Responsible
- More than enough
- NBA team
- Everglades wader
- Attempt to calm down
- Violin maker of note
- "Gyn"
- Latvian capital
- Coats
- Promising clue
- Adams or Knots
- Zodiac lion
- Set of tools
- 1995 Angela Bassett movie
- Playwright Chekhov
- Celeste or Ian
- PC operator
- Put into words
- One-celled plant
- Chinese dynasty
- Stacks
- Have in mind
- Blocks of paper



By Gerald R. Ferguson
Portland, OR

12/9/03

Monday's Puzzle Solved

BETS	MANIC	AHEM
OCHO	OVULO	SAVE
WHISTLERS	MOTHER	
SONORA	APPEASE	
ARON	OER	
SOBSISTERS	SNAP	
ELIEL	TWEET	IRE
CLOSE TO	DRAGNET	
TIM	RAISE	BUTTE
SEER	CITY	FATHER
EDT	YEAR	
EGOTRIP	VESSEL	
DRJOYCE	BROTHERS	
DEAR	ASTOR	OLGA
SWIT	LOUTS	PLOT

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- New Jersey fort
- Old Irish alphabet
- Blow with a blunt object
- Flying stinger
- Part of ABM
- Slanted type; abbr.
- Carry
- Lacquered metalware
- Gymnast Korbut
- Home to billions
- Advance
- Joule fractions

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



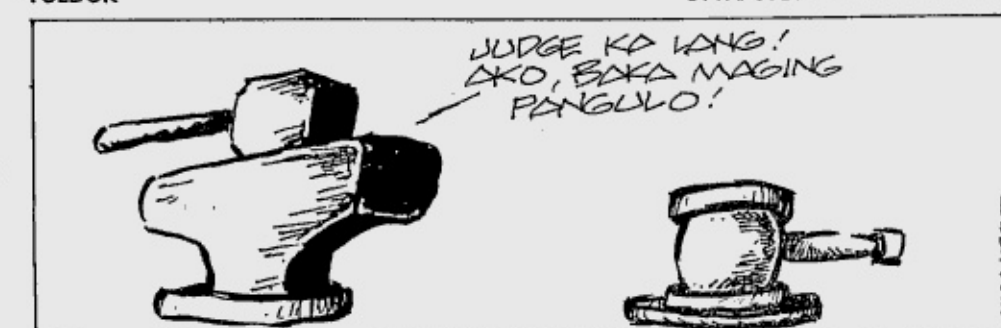
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



Critical and popular success

FROM Dec. 9 to 15, the UP Film Institute presents "Cine Veritas," a video celebration of human rights (Human Rights Day is on Dec. 10), at the University Cinema, UP Diliman. Outstanding "I-Witness" documentaries will be screened.

Schedule:
Dec. 9 at 3 p.m., docus on Filipinos' favorite pastimes—"Dobol," "Kuwentong Hard Court" and "Pinoy Jam." 6 p.m., cocktails. 7 p.m., "Walang Bakas," a docu-drama on involuntary disappearances, directed by Ellen Ongkeko Marfil.

Dec. 10 at 3 p.m., docus on children, youth and women—"Gamugamo sa Dilim," "Bulakbol" and "Pinoy Porno." 5 p.m., meet the "I-Witness" hosts. 7 p.m., images of war—"Dekada '70," "Mandirigma" and "From Iraq with Love."

Dec. 11 at 3 p.m., images of poverty—"Missing," "Bayaning High-Rise," "Sabah: Ang Bagong Amerika." 5:30 p.m., open forum. 7 p.m., award-winners—"Selda Inosente," "Babalik na si Ma'am" and "Kidneys for Sale."

Hosts and producers Howie Severino, Kara David, Vicky Morales, Maki Pulido and Jay Tarve.

For more than five years, GMA-7's "I-Witness" has been a critical and popular success. It has proven that local viewers can appreciate serious-minded programs. For instance, from January to October this year, "I-Witness" has topped its time slot 32 out of 44 weeks.

Thus, on its fifth anniversary, the show presents some of its best work in the "I-Witness" Documentary Film Festival (free admission), in retrospective tribute to its committed producers and hosts:

Kara David understands and empathizes with the plight of the common folk, giving these "small" people the importance they deserve. Citations and awards: Finalist, CMMA Award for Best TV Documentary, 2002 for "Gamugamo sa Dilim," and ABU-CASBAA Unicef Child Rights Award 2003 for "Selda Inosente."

VIEWFINDER

Nestor
U. Torre

Jay Tarve is another awardee: Best Coverage of an Ongoing Issue, "Comfort Women," CNN World Report Award, 1998; Finalist, "Child Labor," New York TV and Film Festival, 1999, and Peabody Award for Investigative Reporting, "Child Labor."

Howie Severino is a leading proponent of video journalism, with 16 years of experience in the field.

Severino's citations and awards: Rotary's Broadcast Journalist of the Year, 2003; finalist, NNK Japan Prize, 2003 International Educational Program Contest for "Babalik na si Ma'am"; finalist, New York Festival for Television, Best News Coverage 2002; and finalist, New York Festival for Television, Best Documentary 2000.

Vicky Morales' honors include finalist, New York Festival Award for Best Television Documentary, Human Relations Category 2002 for "Askal," and finalist in the NY Festival's Social Issues/Current Events Category for "Sabah, ang Bagong Amerika."

And Maki Pulido's "Sex Slaves" was finalist in the NY Festival in 2002.

Feedback

FROM Gerardo B. Reynaldo: "Your Nov. 22 article, 'Sex flicks dominate local film output,' is quite correct. May I add that, in fact, there hasn't been a credible action movie made by the local film industry for the second half of this year.

"In their absence and in direct serious competition with conventional drama films, the sex-drama genre has come out with the most prolific output.

"Significantly, its creators have seized this opportunity to come up

with better-than-average products. What is more astonishing is that the higher-end directors of this type of film ('First Time,' 'Xerex,' 'Bugbog Sarado') have deployed techniques that are innovative in telling their stories of love and lust.

"The plots move faster than usual, the work is kinetic, and some experimental atmosphere is introduced. Generally, these help the characters to appear more interesting than they really are, despite the scarcity of character development on deeper motivation.

"Abroad, it is in the action genre where new cinematic techniques are first tried out, like the slow-motion inter-cutting of 'The Wild Bunch' and the documentary feel of 'Saving Private Ryan,' which are later adapted by directors from other film categories.

"If it looks like the short-time (no pun intended) future of Philippine films is in the sex industry (and if action films remain static in their plots and storytelling), then at least movie buffs can take comfort that, like in songwriting where the Filipino composer excels in composing ballads as opposed to rock music, it is where the real talent of cinematic moviemaking lies."

'Surviving Hunger'

AFRICAN journalist Sorious Samura goes for five weeks without food as he investigates famine in a CNN documentary, "Surviving Hunger," airing at 8 p.m. on Dec. 11.

As famine again threatens millions in Ethiopia, Samura travels to a small village to see how people live with chronic hunger on a day-to-day basis, and how some manage to survive.

He attempts to survive on the same meager diet of the villagers, who subsist on a tenth of the rations they should receive.

He quickly discovers that the daily reality for millions is a diet ranging from nothing to a handful of weeds.

From page A28

Dollywood: Guess who?

models had to wait for almost 30 minutes before she agreed to sashay on the catwalk. They were appalled because at the last minute she said that she did not like what she was wearing. The show had to be stopped while the sexy star was acting up.

Andrea, Michelle kiss

PEOPLE at the NU 107 Rock Awards were a bit shocked when Andrea del Rosario and Michelle Bayle kissed torridly on stage after they presented an award. They probably wanted to be the local version of Madonna and Britney Spears, who also kissed at the MTV awards. Since music is the universal language, perhaps the two singers wanted to show that between two artists like them, there are no more boundaries. Genders don't exist. One music fits all!

A kiss is still a kiss, but doing something original would have stood out more.

Jessa's night

Dingdong Avanzado was the picture of a proud hubby when he was watching his wife Jessa Zaragosa at her "Jessa..Reborn!" concert at Hard Rock.

I asked Dingdong if he was going to sing a duet with Jessa as an added treat for the audience. He smiled, "No. It's her night. I want her to shine."

While Jessa was performing he was busy table-hopping and making sure everybody was having a good time.

I was impressed with the range of Jessa's voice. Her repertoire was varied enough to show her versatility. When she sang "Big Spender," she sounded like Liza Minnelli. She has outgrown her jukebox queen days and is now ripe to be the next soulful diva.

Proud of MYMP

Next to True Faith I have a new favorite band—MYMP (Make Your Momma Proud). Juris Fernandez is on vocals, Mike Manahan does percussion and vocals,

and Chin Alcantara is on guitars and also on vocals. Their debut album "Soulful Acoustic" contains the #1 hit (on Wave 88.3) "A Little Bit."

Juris' voice is crystal clear. Given the right breaks, I know she will go places. Mike is related to Johnny Manahan but he would rather carve a niche of his own. He is so cool and he could easily become a movie star if he wanted to, even if he were not related to Mr. M. Chin is hip and suave.

Listening to their CD is so soothing. Check them out at Aruba Libis every Tuesday and you'll see what I mean.

Friends opening

KUDOS to my all-time fave hangout, Friends, on its opening tonight at El Pueblo Ortigas. It's open bar to invited guests, 6-9 p.m., after which it is open to the public. Performers will be Paolo Santos (whose roots, like

mine, are in Friends) and Kaktooz band and others. Part-owner Bojo Molina will be flying in from Guam, where he now leads a quiet life with his wife, to attend the opening of our "second home."

Everybody at Friends is an instant friend. No need for fancy clothes. You can really let your hair down and keep your spirits up at Friends El Pueblo.

PSBA fair

COME to the PSBA School Fair on Aurora Boulevard, Dec 9-12. Paolo Santos and Nina will be performing on Dec. 11. On Dec 12, Parokya ni Edgar and Moonstar 88 are the guest artists. Tickets at P150 are available at the gate.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

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PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	1 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	2 THE GRUDGE	2 UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN	2 THE GRUDGE	2 OUT OF TIME
3 STAR RUNNER	3 ADAM SANDLER'S 8 CRAZY NIGHTS	3 THE FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	3 THE FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	3 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
4 LOONEY TUNES: BACK IN ACTION	4 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	4 THE FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	4 THE FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2

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6 LOONEY TUNES	6 JEEPERS CREEPERS-2	6 COLD CREEK MANOR
7 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	7 JEEPERS CREEPERS-2	7 THE SPY
8 MR. SUAVE	8 JEEPERS CREEPERS-2	8 MR. SUAVE
9 ELF	9 JEEPERS CREEPERS-2	9 THE SPY
10 GRUDGE-1	10 JEEPERS CREEPERS-2	10 FIGHTING TEMPTATION

... (repeating similar movie listings for other theaters) ...

OPENS DEC. 10 EXCLUSIVELY AT **ArtFilm**

"A CINEMATIC POEM"
— Rick Hwang, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

BALZAC
AND THE LITTLE CHINESE SEAMSTRESS

In China in the early 70's during the dark years of the "Cultural Revolution," Ma and Luo, two teenagers considered as "bourgeois intellectuals" by the system, are sent to the small village of Sichuan in order to be "reeducated" into contact with the population. In this sinister period where the majority of books are prohibited and weddings before the age of 25 are illegal, Ma and Luo will clandestinely discover literature and love at the same time.

COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON
"BALZAC & THE LITTLE CHINESE SEAMSTRESS"
on Dec. 10 at 7pm. Admission Price: P100
For inquiries, contact 752-7866 or 752-7865

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT **ArtFilm**

Ash Wednesday
Edward Burns, Elijah Wood, Rosario Dawson, Oliver Platt

Hells Kitchen, Ash Wednesday, 1980. Sean Sullivan (Elijah Wood) is killed in a vendetta. Three years later, Sean's brother Francis (Edward Burns) receives word that Sean may be alive. But the truth isn't always what it seems in this neighborhood, where violence and betrayal are the local currency.

"Suspenseful and ultimately unpredictable, with a sterling ensemble cast."
— Kevin Thomas, L.A. Times

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18

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ADAM SANDLER'S

Eight CRAZY Nights

IT'S NAUGHTY. IT'S NICE. IT'S ANIMATED.

Featuring star voices from Jon Lovitz and Rob Schneider

When extremely disgruntled small-town guy Davey Stone (voiced by Sandler) faces another holiday season in his New England hometown, he does what he always has - he screws up big and lands in jail. Davey's old basketball referee, Whitey, balls him out with the bright idea of putting Davey to work doing community service. But Davey turns his sentence into a daily disaster for Whitey and the whole town! After a few surprises - including the mysterious reason for Davey's bad attitude and the reappearance of a childhood sweetheart - Davey might find a reason or two to change his ways.

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13

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Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	MR. SUAVE
Ali 2	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
Ali 3	FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
Ali 4	OUT OF TIME
Ali 5	STAR RUNNER
Ali 6	JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
Ali 7	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY

NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL
OPENS THURSDAY DEC. 11

ARANETA COLISEUM

DEC 10	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
DEC 14	PBA FINALS (if necessary)
DEC 15	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
DEC 17	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

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-Mick LaSalle, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

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-Wade Major, BOXOFFICEMAGAZINE

"You'll laugh hard, you'll laugh often, and you'll leave wishing you still believed in Santa."
-Tom Long, DETROIT NEWS

Elf

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WARNING... IT COULD HAPPEN TO YOU. As hot as today's headlines!

First the high fever, followed by shortness of breath, then dry cough, headache and muscular stiffness. Then a slow painful death awaits the victim as the demonic virus slowly devours your body tissues.

NO PLACE TO HIDE, NO PLACE TO RUN. EVIL STRIKES FROM WITHIN.

CABIN FEVER

CATCH IT!

LIONS GATE FILMS PRESENTS CABIN FEVER STARRING RIDER STRONG JORDAN LADO JOEY KERN JAMES DE BELLO CERRA VINCENT GABRIELE ANDREWS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ELLIOTT ROYTH SCREENPLAY BY RANDY PEARLSTEIN PRODUCTION DESIGNER LAUREN MOEWS EDITOR SAM FROELICH EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SCOTT KEDWIN PRODUCED BY NATHAN BARR & ANGELO BALANOVICHI

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY - LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	ANG BABAE SA BREAKWATER
B	AKO, IKAW SIYA
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	MY FIRST ROMANCE
CINEMA-2	AKO, IKAW O SIYA
CINEMA-3	MATRIX REVOLUTIONS
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LOONEY TUNES
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MR. SUAVE
CINEMA-6	WRONG TURN
CINEMA-7	SEX SCANDAL
CINEMA-8	CHAVIT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MASTER AND COMMANDER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LOONEY TUNES
CINEMA-11 (DTS)	COLD CREEK MANOR
CINEMA-12	MATRIX REVOLUTION
CINEMA-14	CHAVIT
CINEMA-15	MR. SUAVE

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	MR. SUAVE
CINEMA-1	UNDERWORLD
CINEMA-2	MY BOSS'S DAUGHTER
CINEMA-4	AMERICAN PSYCHO

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

OPENS TOMORROW!

MYSTIC RIVER

SEAN PENN
TIM ROBBINS
KEVIN BACON
LAURENCE FISHBURNE
MARGA CAY HARDEN
LAURA LINNEY

WITH CLINT EASTWOOD

WE BURY OUR SECRETS, AND WE DON'T TALK ABOUT THEM.

WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS
A FILM BY CLINT EASTWOOD
MYSTIC RIVER
CASTING BY JAMES HAMILTON
COSTUME DESIGNER JANE ROSS
HAIR BY JANE ROSS
MAKEUP BY JANE ROSS
PRODUCTION DESIGNER JANE ROSS
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JANE ROSS
PRODUCED BY JANE ROSS
SCREENPLAY BY JANE ROSS
DIRECTED BY CLINT EASTWOOD

MTRCB RATING: G GENERAL PATRONAGE ALL AGES ADMITTED

WILSON
ONE TOUGH COOKIE

WILSON IS PLAYED BY: "LITA"
VOICE BY: "DONALD FAISON"
BREED: BOXER

LITA HAS A VERY HIGH LEVEL OF ENERGY AND BOUNDLESS ENTHUSIASM ON THE SET MADE HER A REAL FAVORITE WITH THE CAST AND CREW. ALTHOUGH BLESSED WITH THE ATHLETIC GOOD LOOKS FOR STARDOM, HE IS EASILY DISTRACTED NO MATTER HOW MUCH HIS TRAINER TRIES TO MAKE HIM FOCUS ON HIS ACTS. BUT AFTER EVERY SCENE, LITA COULD BE COUNTED ON TO CLOWN AROUND TO THE DELIGHT OF ALL.

BARBARA ANN STAR IS BORN

BARBARA ANN IS PLAYED BY: "BANNER"
VOICE BY: "DELTA BURKE"
BREED: STANDARD POODLE

BANNER BROUGHT A TONE OF COMPLETE PROFESSIONALISM TO THE SET. HE IS MISTAKEN TO BE A PUPPET BY SOME SET VISITORS. AS HE DOES WHAT IS EXACTLY INSTRUCTED FOR HIM TO DO, BANNER PAID CAREFUL ATTENTION TO THE DIRECTOR AND HIS TRAINERS AND WAS ALWAYS ON TIME - IN SPITE OF HOURS IN HAIR AND MAKE UP.

GOOP BOY

OPENS DEC. 10

Rugrats Go Wild

THE FAMILY VACATION GOES OVERBOARD

OPENS TOMORROW!

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Fred Montilla, 84

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE CHILDREN of former movie and television actor and former politician Fred Montilla were prepared for the worst when their father was hospitalized last September.

The star of the 1954 classic "Bondying" suffered a mild heart attack last Sept. 12, according to his daughter, Quezon City Councilor Neneng Montilla. Last Dec. 2, he was taken to the University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay (UERM) Medical Center in Sta. Mesa after he com-

plained of difficulty in breathing.

He died last Friday due to heart failure, said Councilor Montilla. He was 84.

"Last September, his cardiologist said only 30 percent of his lungs were functioning," the daughter told INQUIRER Entertainment yesterday. "He suffered several mild strokes pero hindi niya nararamdaman."

The former actor's remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Shrine in New Manila, Quezon City. He will be transferred to the Albert Hall of the Quezon City Hall today.

His remains will be cremated at the

Funeraria Paz on Araneta Avenue, also in Quezon City tomorrow, after a 9 a.m. Mass at the city hall.

He was a Quezon City councilor for two terms before the Martial Law years. He was reelected in 1998 and served again as councilor for 10 years.

He is survived by his children Toots and Jiggy, Tanggoy and Beth, Tata and Len, and Neneng. His wife, Soccoro, died of cancer in 1991.

Montilla was in show biz for about 45 years and made 125 movies, starting as an "extra" in Vicente Salumbides' "Florante at Laura."



MONTILLA did 125 movies.

Some of his other notable movies were "Awit Ng Bulag" with Paraluman, "Pamana ng Tulisan" with Lilian Leonardo and "Bondying," where he played a man-child. He won the 1954 Pamas best actor award for "Bondying."

Atienza life now a mini 'telenoveLA'

By Nini Valera

VIVA'S Vic del Rosario convinced Manila Mayor Lito Atienza that his life is an inspiration to the youth. So it is only natural that it was made into a television mini-series.

The mayor's only condition, Atienza claimed, was that the series not be called "The Lito Atienza Story."

The five-part mini-series "Sa Iyo Lamang," produced by Viva TV, traces the rise of Atienza from Malate kid to Manila City Hall honcho. The series will start showing on Channel 13 on Dec. 14 at 9 p.m.

Portraying Atienza is Richard Gomez, after Christopher de Leon, to whom the role was supposedly offered first, refused to shave his moustache for the role.

Atienza, 62, is clean-shaven and has never worn a moustache in his life. He is known for wearing brightly-colored floral shirts, a style he acquired when he and his wife Ma. Evelina lived in Hawaii in the early '50s. The couple, who met when they were both dancers of the Bayanihan dance troupe, has been married for 35 years. They have six children, one of whom is Manila Councilor Kim Atienza.

Blurring the line

With a TV series with a play date very close to the campaign season for the 2004 elections, Atienza blurs the line between entertainment and politics. He will be running for his third and last term as mayor of Manila in the 2004 elections.

"It's just the timing," Atienza protested. "It's not part of my campaign. From the title alone, you could tell it's a love story. Love for family, love for your community, love for your country."

He claimed that Viva's Del Rosario had offered to make his life into a TV series to "serve as an inspiration to the people to be more confident about public reaction to individuals wanting to be of service to their country."

Put like that, how could Atienza refuse?

Ex-ad man

"We no longer discussed payment (for the rights to make my life into a tele-series)," the mayor said in Filipino.

A former advertising and public relations practitioner, Atienza definitely knows the value of the media mileage this TV exposure would generate and hopefully transform into votes. More than a year ago, he plastered Manila with the slogan "Buhayin ang Maynila," transforming the last two letters, his initials, into graphic visuals that only an ad man could have thought of.

Atienza said he had not yet seen even the rough edit of the mini-series and that he had no creative control over the project.

"I trust Joel Lamangan and Roy Iglesias," he said. "Frankly, I did not meddle with the script. As long as they did not add anything that is not of good taste, (everything would be fine with me)."

Plaza Miranda blast

The series will highlight his career as mayor of Manila, said Atienza. But it will take off from the Plaza Miranda bombing in 1972.

Guess who?

GUESS who is this young actress, a former commercial model, who got a tongue-lashing from a talent manager because she had a big fight with the manager's ward, a young actor from a show biz clan.

There has always been animosity between the two young stars during the taping of their youth-oriented show. The manager pulled out her ward from the show and threatened the young actress that if they bumped into each other again, she would slap her.

DOLLY WOOD



Dolly Ann Carvajal

Guess who is this young singer whose parents are unreasonably strict. The poor young thing is not even allowed to watch movies with her friends or go malling. Having a boyfriend is also strictly prohibited.

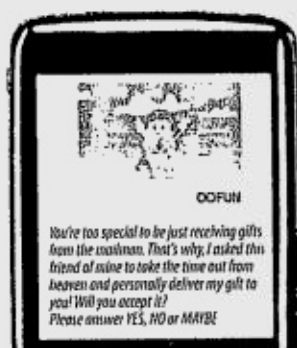
Well-meaning friends asked her if she has ever had a boyfriend, even a secret one, because being in love would make her sing love songs with more passion. She retorted, "Of course I've had one. On the telephone!"

Guess who is this sexy actress who acted like a prima donna during a fashion show of undergarments. The other sexy stars and

DOLLYWOOD/A26

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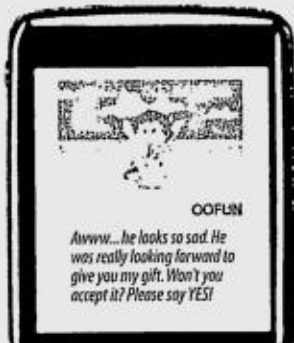
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[maybe]



[no]



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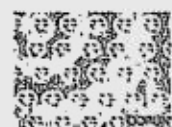
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ADB bullish on Asia, maintains RP outlook

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday upgraded its economic outlook on developing Asia, noting that the fastest growing region in the world was now becoming less vulnerable to downturns in industrialized countries as China's economic boom was boosting intra-regional trade.

ADB president Tadao Chino yesterday said in a press briefing that developing economies in the Asia-Pacific region would now likely grow by 5.7 percent this year, revising upward its earlier forecast of 5.3 percent made last September.

Chino said the region would grow faster this year than in 2002 despite the many challenges—the conflict in Iraq, the volatility in oil prices, uncertainty caused by global terrorism and the outbreak of the killer virus SARS early this year.

"The outlook for a rebound in the industrialized countries in 2004-2005 and the resilience demonstrated by developing Asia in 2003 indicate the region is poised for higher growth over the next two years," Chino said.

In the case of the Philippines, however, the ADB maintained its gross domestic product growth projection of 4 percent for this year and 4.5 percent for 2004. In 2005, the bank said the country's GDP growth would firm up at 4.2 percent.

Overall, the bank expects the Asian economy to grow by 6.2 percent in 2004 and 6.3 percent in 2005.

"Developing Asia will remain the fastest growing region," Chino noted.

Looking ahead, he said Asia's economic outlook should become less vulnerable to downturns in developed countries as intra-regional trade expands and regional economies focus on policies to spur domestic demand.

GDP (percentage change from previous full year):

	2002 Actual	2003 Latest	2003 Previous	2004 Latest	2004 Previous	2005 Latest
Developing Asia	5.6	5.7	5.3	6.2	6.1	6.3
East Asia	6.5	5.9	5.6	6.5	6.5	6.6
China	8.0	8.5	7.8	8.0	7.9	7.7
Hong Kong	2.3	2.7	2.1	4.8	4.8	4.6
Taiwan	3.5	3.1	3.1	4.4	4.4	4.8
Southeast Asia	4.1	4.1	3.9	5.1	4.9	5.2
Malaysia	4.1	4.5	4.1	5.7	4.9	5.6
Philippines	4.4	4.0	4.0	4.5	4.5	4.2
Singapore	2.2	0.5	0.5	4.5	4.5	5.0
Thailand	5.3	6.3	6.0	6.3	6.0	5.9
Vietnam	6.4	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.1	7.1
South Asia	4.2	6.3	5.8	6.1	6.1	6.5
India	4.3	6.7	6.0	6.3	6.3	6.7
Central Asia	7.3	7.5	7.5	5.9	5.9	7.9
The Pacific	-0.3	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.8

Chino stressed that the growth of intra-regional trade, fueled by demand from the huge market of the People's Republic of China, was posing opportunities and challenges for the rest of Asia.

For instance, he said the developing economies of Asia must raise productivity and competi-

tiveness by undertaking major structural reforms over the medium term. In turn, he noted that these would accelerate growth over the medium to long term.

Chino cited some distinct features of the Asian economy witnessed in 2003:

ADB/B2

INDICATORS CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 55.325 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 08, 2003

Y 108.34 = \$ 1

As of 5 p.m., Dec. 05, 2003

GOLD: \$404.20-404.70

per ounce Hong Kong, Dec. 08, 2003



NOVEMBER DECEMBER

STOCK MARKET

Share prices rise 0.33%

SHARE prices closed 0.33 percent higher yesterday, buoyed by positive local developments including the capture of a notorious kidnapping gang leader, dealers said.

Favorable economic developments such as signs that the budget deficit in November would be below the official ceiling also boosted sentiment, although gains were partially offset by last minute profit-taking.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 4.50 points to 1,349.87 after trading between 1,343.90 and 1,354.40.

Gainers beat losers 34 to 29, with 43 stocks unchanged.

Volume slipped to 154.76 million shares worth P427.76 million from 240.74 million shares worth P614.27 million on Friday.

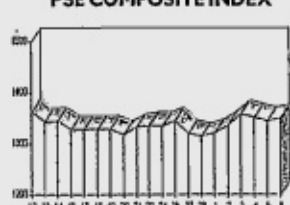
The all-shares index was up 4.98 points at 857.86 while the commercial-industrial index gained 7.24 to 2,032.67. The property index was down 0.63 at 536.03 and mining 5.08 lower at 1,648.37 while oil slipped 0.01 at 1.35 as the banking and financial services sector gained 0.42 to 425.

"This is one of the rare instances when the local market is insulated from the region's weakness. The arrest of Commander Robot is one positive event which provided the market that much-needed breather," said Mark Alan Canizares of Citiseconline.com.

Commander Robot, the alias of Galib Andang, a leader of the feared Abu Sayyaf Muslim militant kidnapping gang, was arrested in Mindanao late Sunday after a decade of kidnapping Christians and foreigners for ransom.

AFP

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

WB warns gov't on failure to pass tax measures

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE WORLD Bank has expressed serious concern over the failure of Congress to legislate crucial revenue measures, particularly the indexation of beer and tobacco taxes to inflation that would have raised P14 billion in additional revenue, as it could dim the country's chances of sustaining fiscal discipline next year and reduce its debt burden over time.

Undersecretary Juanita Amantong, officer in charge of the Department of Finance, said the Development Budget Coordination Committee would have to review

the fiscal targets for 2004 without the expected revenue from the higher beer and tobacco taxes.

"The government may have to reconsider its deficit-reduction program if the revenue measures would not be passed," said World Bank country director Robert Vance Pulley.

The DBCC had set a deficit target of P197.8 billion for 2004 from P202 billion this year. Even the Congressional Budget Planning Office estimated that the fiscal gap next year would be higher by about P35 billion after the government included in its revenue program some P14 billion in proceeds from

the Marcos wealth and another P12 billion in tax collection from revenue measures like the "sin taxes" that had yet to be passed.

Congress last week shelved the bill on the adjustment of the so-called "sin taxes."

At the same time, the bicameral committee that ratified critical revenue measures like the rationalization of documentary stamp taxes and the imposition of gross receipts taxes on banks in lieu of the value-added tax has withdrawn its support for both bills. Banks' return to GRT is revenue-neutral but the rationalization of the DST should yield P5 billion in

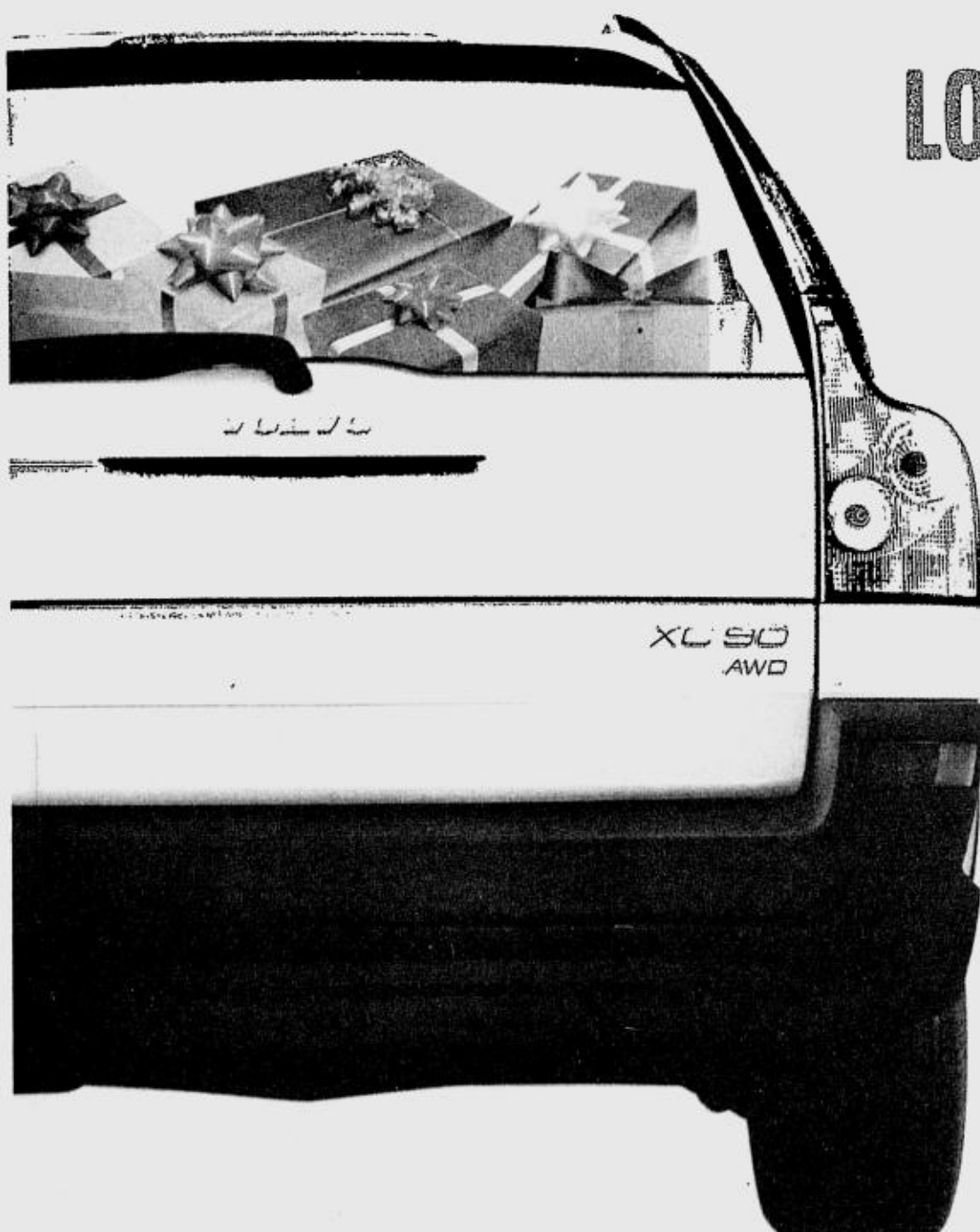
additional collection yearly.

"Revenues from sin taxes have been included in next year's program. If they are not forthcoming then it will have a serious impact on the debt reduction program of the government. They have to have a replacement because it is a very important tax reform," Pulley said.

Pulley yesterday signed with Development Bank of the Philippines president Simon Paterno a \$10-million loan and a \$9-million grant for rural power projects. The loan will be co-signed through DBP, the state-owned wholesale lender.

"We were disappointed that

WB/B2



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Firms formulate index to understand poverty

By Vincent Cabreja
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—LOCAL firms have developed a 'quality of life' index to reflect social conditions in the countryside, according to AC Nielsen Philippines.

AC Nielsen executive director Fidelidad Ester Magpantay said during the recently concluded 18th Philippine Advertising Congress held here, that the index would measure social and economic consumption from the point of view of the average family man.

Magpantay said the index would be a major input in developing companies' marketing programs to address household needs.

Magpantay presented the index in behalf of a workshop group led by ABS-CBN president Eugenio Lopez III, this year's PAC chair.

"The Filipino now is different from the Filipino a few decades ago. In what specific ways, we were not sure. As business executives, we were peering mainly through the lens of revenues and profits, new products in the market, surges in advertising activity, fads and crazes," Magpantay explained.

Magpantay added that the average business leader knows more about the Metro Manila resident than the average Filipino in the provinces, a matter that has concerned businesses whose groundwork in marketing is always "Manila-centered."

She said contemporary marketing strategies must consider that most of the countryside is urbanizing and this feature has altered consumption patterns in the provinces.

"Looking at expenditures as a proportion of income, the poorest 20 percent of Filipino families spend more than they earn. For a time in the early 1990s, the second poorest

group was actually making ends meet, but by 1997, they were back to operating on a deficit," she said.

She noted the unprecedented sale and accessibility of mobile phones to both rich and poor Filipinos.

She said the unusual telecommunications industry growth "is not just the convenience posed by cell phones... but the feeling of being connected and one with our families, peers and interest groups no matter the time, place and situation."

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TOYOTA

Viagra is being tested for asthma

A NUMBER of readers do not wish me to shorten my articles so the Editor and I have come to a compromise. He will use a larger font, the one my daughter was baptized in.

An Australian friend, who suffers from recurrent back problems, is finding it hard to borrow money. So I introduced him to a bank that specializes in back-to-back loans.

The inauguration of a gay Bishop by the Anglican Church has wrecked their relationship with 7 African countries. In the future, it will be known as the Rectanglian Church.

After 30 years of service, the Concorde has been taken out of service. It flew the Atlantic at twice the speed of sound and had a very long distinctive nose. Last week at Sotheby's, a nose cone was sold for \$600,000. Now Barbara Streisand is thinking of auctioning hers.

Galen Holdings, Northern Ireland's biggest drug maker won FDA's approval for a spearmint-flavored, chewable birth control pill. "OVCON 35 provides an alternative for women," said a spokesperson. The market for oral contraceptives is worth \$2 billion a year, and the profits of Galen rose 600 percent last quarter. BUY.

Here are more stories from BLOOMBERG, all true.

A man whose arm got stuck in a toilet while trying to retrieve his cell phone delayed a commuter train from New York. The train and its passengers had to wait an hour and a quarter while rescue crews tore down the bathroom door walls and used an acetylene torch to cut through the stainless steel commode to free the stuck passenger. 1,000 commuters were delayed and the cell phone was not recovered.

In California, the President of GoTo shops is selling condoms in 55 different sizes, from 3 inches

to 10 inches, and from tight fitting to loose. By downloading a free kit, customers can use a tape measure to figure their specific size, and order a dozen for \$11.95, that are guaranteed a perfect fit. The first 78 customers ordered 48 different sizes. By the 200th customer, all 55 sizes had been bought. Interested females should contact the company.

The former Archbishop of Canterbury encouraged a young prostitute to better herself and she is now an ordained minister. The London Sun reported that she had been a single mother of two with a criminal record. She is now a happy, intelligent young woman and an excellent minister.

VIAGRA is now being tested to cure altitude sickness and possibly asthma. 100 volunteer medical students in Bolivia are testing the drug at high altitudes when blood vessels in the lungs constrict, leading to potentially fatal pulmonary edema. VIAGRA causes the blood vessels in the lungs to dilate, and aid the transfer of oxygen to the bloodstream. The drug acts first on the genitals and then on the lungs so it may well turn out to be a cure for asthma, *na lang*.

LAST week, the index fell 25 points, yet the degree of risk was unchanged, much to my astonishment. This was the first time such a thing had happened so I was left to my own devices on how to interpret it. As it was early in the up cycle, I decided that the fall in stock prices was due to an emotional response that FRJ was running for President. This was confirmed by the rise in the peso to a record high, so I decided it was temporary and I wrote that you should not sell your good stocks. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the market rose at an ever-accelerating pace until the degree of risk had risen to 92 on the PHISIX.

Several leaders reached 97-100, so I sent out a SELL signal

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

urging caution. All but one has fallen. I have sent out the scenario for the coming week and for the rest of the month. The indicator is working better than I ever imagined, but I regard myself as still in a learning process. A University in the US has taken an interest in it so its fame is spreading, thanks to INQ7.net.

On the local front, inflation increased from 3.1 percent to 3.3 percent due to the weak peso that causes the price of imports, such as gasoline, to increase. Next year, the government expects inflation to increase. Exports improved by 6.2 percent, only the second time this year. The last time was in March when it increased by 8.5 percent. There was a big increase in demand for high-end products, such as plasma screens and liquid crystal displays, but the countries that benefited from this were Thailand, South Korea and Taiwan. All we got was a trickle down effect into the low-end. The Philippines is slow to adapt to changing demand so all we get is the dregs. A fall in imports last month does not bode well for May, as there is a 6-month gap for re-assembly of components.

Earlier this year, the government raised P73 billion from retail sales of 3-year and 5-year bonds, which I mentioned favorably. Last week, they sold another P32 billion from retail sales of 3-year bonds, making a total of P105 billion or \$2 billion from the local market. This is in addition to all the money that was raised from the various sales of dollar bonds, some of which were for Napocor, which is now in the process

of raising more money under its own recognition.

Central Bank Governor Rafael Buenaventura sees inflation increasing from the current 3.3 percent, a weaker peso and slower than forecast economic growth next year. Consumer prices may rise between 4 percent and 5 percent and the peso could average 55.50 against 54.50 this year. There could also be some wage adjustments and gasoline prices may remain high. The 91-day treasury bill, which is used as a benchmark for borrowing, is expected to average 8 percent next year against 5.65 percent this year so interest rates are due for a considerable rise. He has asked the government to trim their forecast of 4.9 percent to 5.8 percent to a minimum of 4.2 percent. This is not exactly inspiring news for would-be investors.

In the US, the government created 57,000 new jobs and the unemployment rate fell marginally from 6 percent to 5.9 percent. This is nowhere near good enough as there has to be at least 150,000 new jobs a month, preferably 200,000. The stock market was unimpressed, and both the DOW and the NASDAQ fell on disappointment. In spite of the slow recovery in the labor market, the economy remains strong with GDP in the 3rd quarter, revised upwards to 8.2 percent. This is unlikely to be sustained in the 4th quarter but productivity and profits have risen faster than expected, proving the optimists correct so far.

The dollar remains weak, and the euro hit a record high of 1.21 from a low of 0.85. The pound is at 1.73, its highest level in years, and the Australian dollar has excelled with a rise from 0.52 to 0.73. And for the first time in 7 years, the gold price has risen above \$400 an ounce, a reflection of the dollar's weakness. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of December 8, 2003)					
STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Astrosurf Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	44,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	6,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	44	44	43.5	44	361,000
China Banking Corp.	660	660	660	660	13,220
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	35	34	34	58,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.56	20,180,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	26.5	26	26.5	92,400
Philippine National Bank	24	24	24	24	100
Phil. Savings Bank	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	5,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	2,700
Security Bank Corp.	16.25	16.75	16.25	16.75	1,200
Union Bank of the Phil.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	6,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1750	1760	1755	1760	1,150
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1370	1385	1370	1385	1,780
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	25	25	25	25	1,100
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.68	0.68	810,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	750	755	745	750	810,000
Global Tel. Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.042	0.043	300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.039	0.037	0.039	9,500,000
Philippine Tel. Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.83	1,080,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel. Co.	805	825	805	820	141,480
Smart Communications Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	200,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15	15	14.75	14.75	228,500
Manila Electric Co. B	23.75	23.75	23.5	23.5	1,044,700
Petrone Corp.	2.15	2.15	2.14	2.15	2,181,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	600,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	4,000
Samurai Wares Mfg. Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	90,000
Union Cement Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	1,070,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	75,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30	30	105,000
Infinito Foods Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	101,400
San Miguel Corp. A	54.5	55	54.5	55	17,300
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	4,400
Universal Robina Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	140,000
Vilanch Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	350,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hldg A	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	20,000
Abacus Con Res & Hldg B	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
Ayala Corp.	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	6,503,000
Abotex Equity Ventures	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.2	187,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	90,000
ATNI Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9	9	9	9	24,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	420,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	250,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	1,000,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.04	0.041	0.04	0.041	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.23	0.23	230,000
Ever-Gosco Resources	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	70,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	18.75	18.75	18	18.25	371,100
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	30,000
Ionics Inc.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	129,000
J. G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1	1	1	1	5,000
Koorn Holdings Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	20,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	260,000
Mindtech Inv. Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	90,000
Musica Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	150,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	150,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	120,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	37,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	40,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	120,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Bella Corp.	0.57	0.59	0.57	0.59	650,000
Fernando Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	180,000
Lumina & Resorts Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	150,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	34	34	34	34	100
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	40,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs Corp. (Pdr)	25	25	25	25.5	252,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
Philweb Corp. Warrants	0.0008	0.0008	0.0008	0.0008	6,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	6,287,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	4,550,000
C & P Properties Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	150,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	710,000
Empire East Land	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	20,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	3,880,000
Houlihan's Prima Inc.	2.18	2.18	2.18	2.18	50,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	490,000
Fit-Estate Land Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	190,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.3	9,342,000
Zipporah Realty Hldgs Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	30,000
Mining					
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	2,000
Lapointe Cons Mng. Co. A	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	909,000
Lapointe Cons Mng. Co. B	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	2,550,000
Mansa Mining Corp. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	3,000,000
Orinco Corp.	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	10,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	1,000,000
Philux Mining Corp. A	0.34	0.35	0.33	0.33	2,690,000
Philux Mining Corp. B	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	1,800,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	1,800,000
Oil					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	500,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	21,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	21,000,000
The Philoil Corp. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	80,000
The Philoil Corp. B	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	10,000
Sinopharm Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	500,000
Vulcan Ind't	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	290,000

DISCLOSURES

BASIC Consolidated Inc. appointed Aldrin Cerrado of Syclp Gorres Velayo and Co., the new engagement partner, as external editor of the company for 2003.

PRIME Media Holdings Inc. disclosed it is cleaning up its balance sheet to have investors inject their assets, either equity holdings in media-related industry or participation in a project in allied industry, into the company in exchange of shares.

MANILA Jockey Club Inc. declared a 20-percent stock dividend and will have a stock rights offering with a ratio of one share for every share held at P1 per share. The company will increase its authorized capital stock from P300 million to P500 million.

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission approved the change in **Vivant Corp.**'s primary purpose from engaging "in businesses related to the internet" to a "holding company." Also, its preferred shares, whether issued or not are convertible as common shares at the option of the company and can be reissued as common shares.

PHILIPPINE Tobacco Flue-Curing and Redrying Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Feb. 6, 2 p.m. at its principal office in Quezon City. Stockholders of record as of Dec. 30 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

ANSCOR Consolidated Corp. bought 480,000 shares of A.SORIANO Corp. Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

December 8, 2003	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.822030415	1.000000	55.341000
Japan	Yen	0.007636	0.009289	0.514100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.42203	1.729900	95.734400
Hongkong	Dollar	0.105887	0.128811	7.128500
Switzerland	Franc	0.644679	0.784252	43.401300
Canada	Dollar	0.630101	0.766518	42.419900
Singapore	Dollar	0.479654	0.583499	32.291400
Australia	Dollar	0.604612	0.735510	40.703900
Bahrain	Dinar	2.180568	2.652661	146.800900
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.219203	0.266660	14.757200
Brunei	Dollar	0.478258	0.581801	32.197400
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000097	0.000118	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020603	0.025063	1.387000
UAE	Dirham	0.223822	0.272279	15.068200
Euro	Euro	1	1.216500	67.322300

US Fed to hold rates steady

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve officials are set to hold interest rates steady at 45-year lows today but analysts disagree on whether the central bank will use this meeting to ditch a controversial commitment to holding rates down.

Whatever the Fed chooses to say following its policy gathering, economists said the underlying message will remain the same: any rate hike is still several months away.

Fed officials have suggested as much recently, saying in numerous speeches that inflation was unlikely to flare up when the economy was far from employing all readily available workers and swathes of industry lie idle.

While the jobless rate dropped to

an eight-month low of 5.9 percent last month, the level of employment is still 2.4 million below where it stood before the economy sank into recession in 2001. And US industries are not using a quarter of their productive capacity.

Indeed, some policymakers have said such circumstances keep alive the risk already low inflation could move lower.

"You'd have to argue you're not talking about any rate increase until the second half of next year," said longtime Fed watcher David Jones, chairman of soon-to-open Investors' Security Trust Co. in Fort Myers, Fla.

Fed officials will announce their rate decision and sketch out their view of the outlook on Tuesday, fol-

lowing their last policy meeting of the year.

After each of the last three gatherings, the Fed has said it expected to keep rates low for "a considerable period," a vague commitment but one surprisingly explicit for a central bank historically loath to tie its hands in any way.

Many analysts believe a decision to jettison the pledge would simply reflect this intellectual discomfort and would not indicate officials felt it would soon be time to boost borrowing costs from their current 1958 low of 1 percent.

"It's going to be a lively debate," said Doug Lee, head of consulting firm Economics from Washington.

Reuters

Global growth signs intensify—BIS

BASEL, Switzerland—Signs of a global economic recovery intensified in the months leading up to November, heralded by a return of investor confidence, the Bank of International Settlements (BIS) said on Sunday.

But the BIS, a central bank to the world's central banks, warned that there were still isolated dangers, including allegations of fraud in the mutual fund industry and the arrest of a Russian business leader, that could threaten confidence.

"So strong were the signs of a global economic recovery in October, 2003, that they surprised even already sanguine investors," the BIS said of its quarterly review, which covered the three-month period to mid-November.

The report, which is optimistic

compared with recent quarters but still cautious, comes amid growing signs that a three-year economic downturn that has weighed on global markets is being pushed aside.

"Yields rose, equities resumed their upward climb and corporate and emerging market spreads narrowed," the report said. "Such confidence about the outlook had not been so widely shared in September, when investors in government bond markets had seemed disappointed by the macroeconomic data."

But the BIS warned that there were isolated events that exposed potential vulnerabilities to the upturn.

Credit-rating downgrades of DaimlerChrysler and later of Ford Motor Co debt sent shockwaves through the corporate debt market, the BIS said.

The Ford cut sparked fears that a further downgrade, which would bring Ford below investment-grade to "junk" status, could cause systemic problems in the financial sector.

Ford Motor Credit has about \$130 billion in outstanding unsecured debt, making it one of the largest finance companies globally, the BIS said.

Separately, the arrest in October of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, chief executive of Russian oil giant YUKOS and Russia's richest man, increased investors' doubts about Russia's recent upgrade to investment-grade status.

Fears that investors would pull out of US mutual funds appeared unfounded as investors poured money into equity funds in September and October.

Reuters

US data, falling dollar batter Asian stocks

SINGAPORE—Japanese stocks fell more than 3 percent on Monday after disappointing US jobs data sent the dollar to three-year lows against the yen, battering car makers and blue chips such as NEC Corp.

Asian stocks tracked Wall Street lower, with Japan's Nikkei ending down 3.2 percent, Taiwan down 0.9 percent, South Korea losing 0.58 percent and Australia down 0.15 percent.

MSCI's broadest dollar-based index of shares in the Asia Pacific outside of Japan was down 0.16 percent.

"The US economy may not necessarily be in that bad a shape but the downward momentum in the dollar, initially blamed on geopolitical risks and the US current account deficit, has been relentless," said Mitsuru Sahara, vice

president of currency dealing at UFJ Bank.

The disappointing outlook from Intel Corp late Thursday only hit US markets on Friday, knocking the tech-heavy Nasdaq 1.57 percent lower and dealing a second blow to regional stocks.

In Japan, electronics conglomerates NEC and Fujitsu Ltd fell around 7 percent. Hitachi fell more than 6 percent, while Nissan Motor Co and office equipment maker Canon Inc fell over 2 percent.

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing, the world's largest contract microchip maker, fell 2.3 percent, while South Korea's LG Electronics Inc sank 2.7 percent.

Australia slipped despite upbeat economic signals and the solid debut of Richard Branson's Virgin Blue discount airline.

Reuters

Japan money growth sluggish; lending down

TOKYO—Lending by Japanese banks fell for the 71st straight month in November while growth in money supply remained sluggish, a sign that a weak financial sector clouded the sustainability of a recent economic recovery.

Japan's most widely watched measure of money supply, M2—cash, demand deposits and time deposits held by households and firms—plus certificates of deposit (CDs), rose 1.6 percent in November from a year earlier, the Bank of Japan said on Monday.

The rise, a gauge of growth in the financial sector's supply of funds to the rest of the economy, was little changed from October's 1.5-percent increase.

Analysts said the slow money supply growth, along with separate data showing a 5-percent drop in bank lending in November, indicated that banks remained too busy unloading bad loans to lend, while firms and consumers were wary of borrowing.

It also suggested that the BOJ's ultra-easy policy of flooding the financial system with money and holding interest rates near zero was doing little to improve the money flows needed to add pace to a recent export-led economic recovery.

"The rise in money supply is weak and shows that banks are still struggling to get rid of their bad loans and fix their balance sheets," said Yasuo Goto, economist at Mitsubishi Research Institute. Reuters



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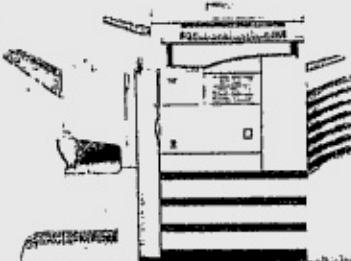
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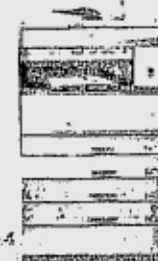
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COUPLES share light moment surrounded by the illuminated buildings at the People's Square in Shanghai. China's economy is rumbling ahead, and power suppliers have great difficulties keeping up, with potentially dire consequences for an increasingly energy-dependent economy.

AFP

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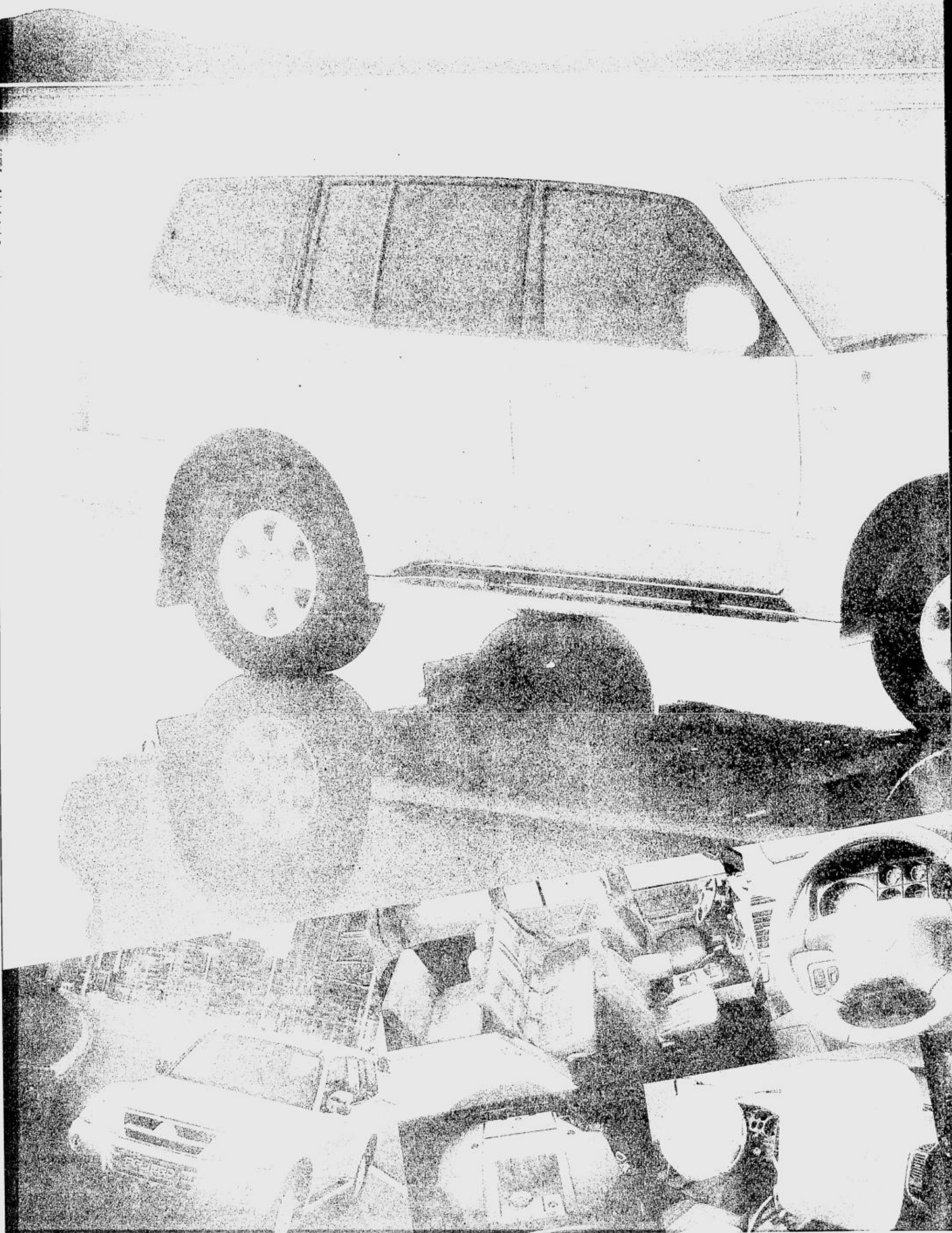
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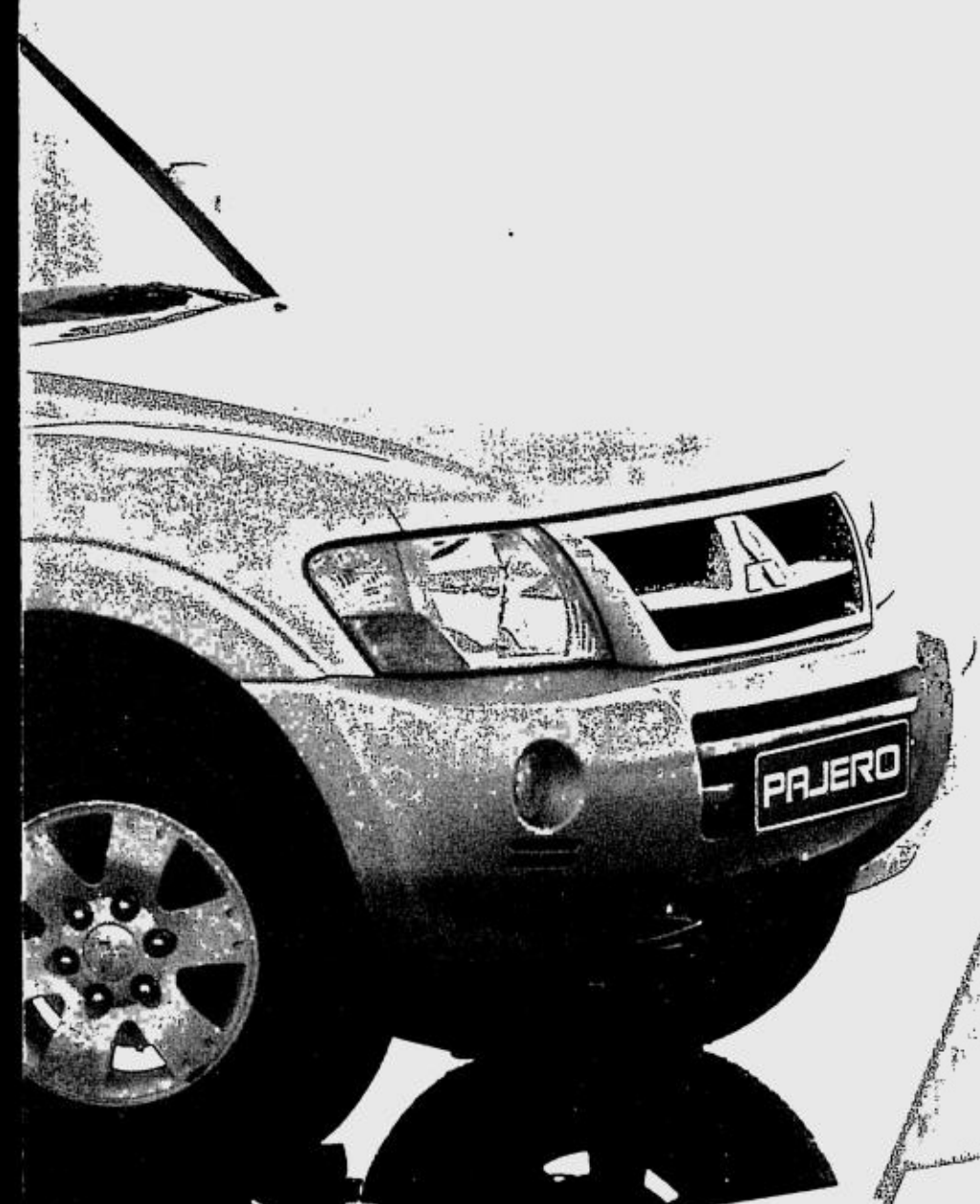
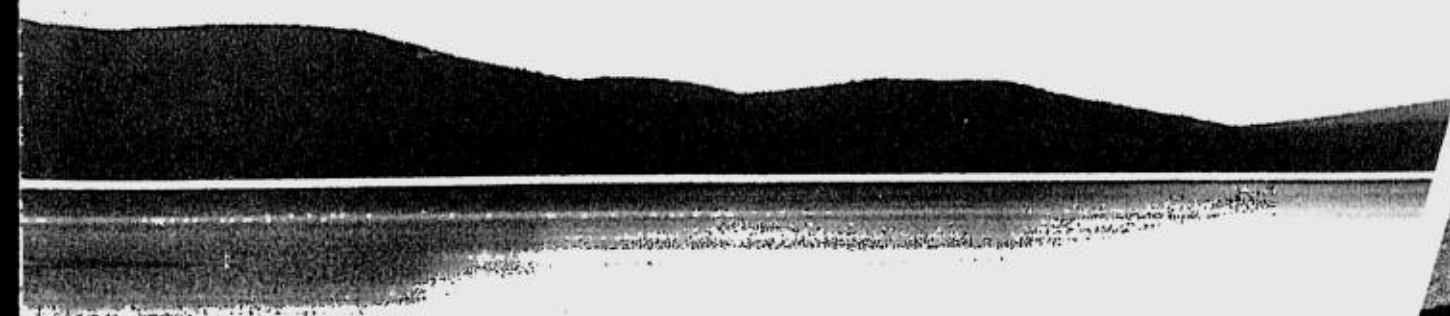
METRO MANILA: CITIMOTORS - Makati - Tels. 892-0331 to 42 CITIMOTORS - Las Piñas - Tels. 875-1745, 873-8503, 875-1756, 875-1704 DIAMOND MOTOR - Greenhills - Tels. 727-0351 to 75, 721-0338 DIAMOND MOTOR - Marikina - Tels. 727-0351 to 75, 721-0338 DIAMOND MOTOR - Valle Verde - Tels. 671-9105, 681-4101, 681-4133 DIAMOND MOTOR - Quezon Avenue - Tels. 372-3901 to 15, 414-9440 to 42, 414-9433 to 37 DIAMOND MOTOR - Fairview - Tels. 418-3042, 935-3731 to 32 DIAMOND MOTOR - Kalookan - Tels. 364-20-61 to 69, 364-9762 MITSUBISHI MOTORS - Balintawak - Tels. 330-8901, 330-8903 LUZON: CALEB MOTOR - Naga City - Tel. Nos. (054) 811-6119, 473-4955, 473-4977 CARWORLD - Pampanga - Tel. (045) 963-1111 CARWORLD - Tarlac - (045) 982-4640 CARWORLD - Marikina - Tel. Nos. (044) 711-2895 to 2897, 711-2469 CARWORLD - Malolos - Tels. (044) 791-6320, (044) 791-2405 to 06, Cel. No. (0918) 231-7819 CARWORLD - Olongapo - Tel. Nos. (047) 224-4111, (047) 766-4235 to 36 FREEWAY MOTOR - Isabela - Tel. 682-6401 FREEWAY MOTOR - Cabanatuan - Tels. (044) 463-1391, 463-6105 JABEZ MOTOR - Dasmariñas, Cavite - (040) 416-5968, 850-0119, (02) 529-8106 MO Balluag - (044) 766-4235 to 36 FREEWAY MOTOR - Urdaneta - Tel. (075) 568-2502, 568-3312 MOTORPLAZA - Bauang, La Union - Tel. (072) 705-5050, 705-3834 MOTORPLAZA - Baguio City - (074) 300-3571, 300-4739 SFM SAL Tels. (075) 517-3060, 517-5635 MOTORPLAZA - Urdaneta - Tel. (075) 568-2502, 568-3312 MOTORPLAZA - Bauang, La Union - Tel. (072) 705-5050, 705-3834 MOTORPLAZA - Baguio City - (074) 300-3571, 300-4739 SFM SAL Tels. (043) 756-5622 to 25, 756-5194, 756-1018 SFM SALES - San Pablo City - Tels. (049) 562-0690, 562-0691 VISAYAS: AVESCOR MOTORS - Bacolod - Tels. (034) 435-2111 to 14, 433-0551 AVESCOR MOTORS - Iloilo City - Tels. (043) 756-5622 to 25, 756-5194, 756-1018 SFM SALES - San Pablo City - Tels. (049) 562-0690, 562-0691 VISAYAS: AVESCOR MOTORS - Bacolod - Tels. (034) 435-2111 to 14, 433-0551 AVESCOR MOTORS - Iloilo City - Tels. 0748 MITSUBISHI MOTORS CEBU - Tels. (032) 345-1233, 420-5777 MITSUBISHI MOTORS DUMAGUETE - Tel. (035) 225-1428 MITSUBISHI MOTORS TACLOBAN - Tel. (053) 323-3724, MITSUBISHI MOTORS TAGBILARAN - Tels. (062) 222-1111 to 13 KARASIA - Davao/North - Tels. (082) 298-1490 to 93 KARASIA - Tagum - Tel. (084) 217-3582 MINDANAO INTEGRATED-Gen. Santos - Tels. (083) 302-0586 ZAMBOANGA MOTORS - Zamboanga City - Tels. (062) 993-0786, 991-



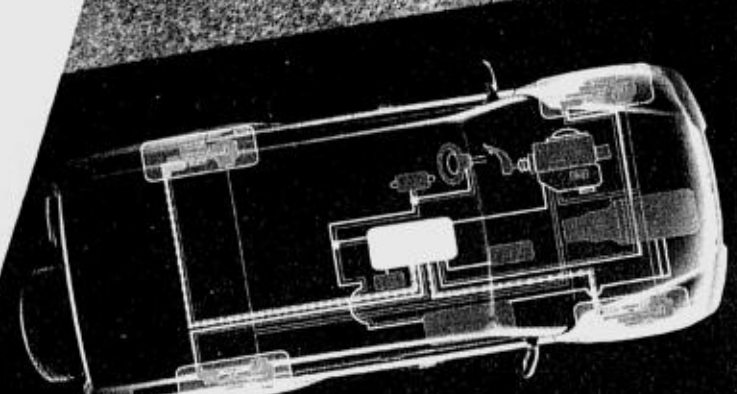
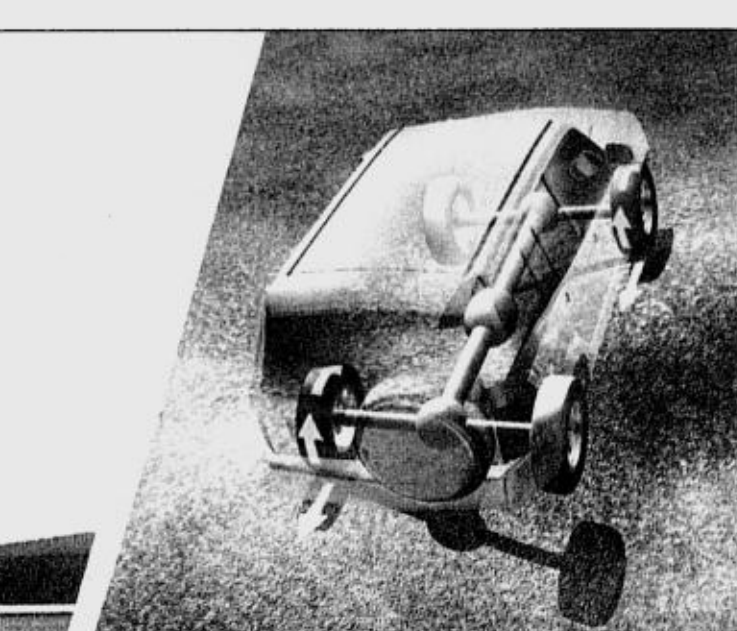
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Mitsubishi Pajero

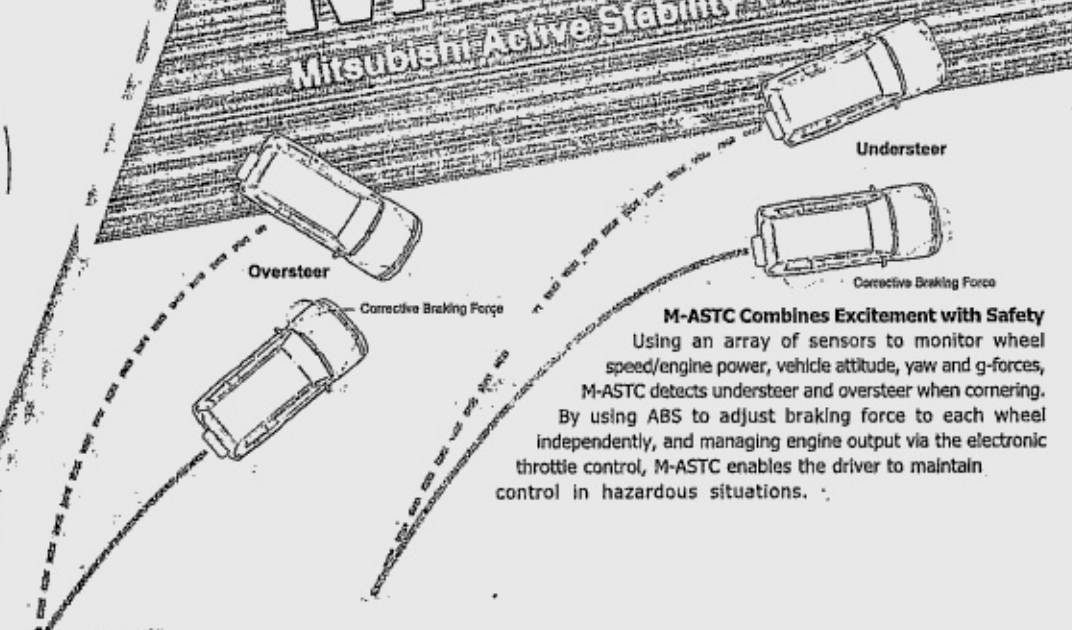


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1 LOONEY TUNES	1 MR. SUAVE	1 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
2 ELF	2 CHAVIT SINGSON	2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
3 MR. SUAVE	3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	3 THE GRUDGE
4 THE GRUDGE	4 BABAE SA BREAKWATER	4 ELF
5 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	5 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	5 OUT OF TIME
6 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	6 ELF	6 SCARY MOVIE 3
7 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	7 STAR RUNNER	7 STAR RUNNER
8 OUT OF TIME	8 OUT OF TIME	8 LOONEY TUNES
	9 SCARY MOVIE 3	9 MR. SUAVE
	10 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	10 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
		11 CHAVIT SINGSON
SM CITY CEBU 211315	SM SOUTHMALL 055044	SM CINEMA TUTUBAN 211402
1 MASTER & COMMANDER	1 ELF	1 STAR RUNNER
2 SCARY MOVIE 3	2 THE GRUDGE	2 CHAVIT SINGSON
3 LOONEY TUNES	3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	3 MR. SUAVE
4 STAR RUNNER	4 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	4 BABAE SA BREAKWATER
5 THE WISHER	5 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	
6 SEX SCANDAL	6 SCARY MOVIE 3	
7 MR. SUAVE	7 STAR RUNNER	
8 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	8 OUT OF TIME	
	9 MR. SUAVE	
	10 BABAE SA BREAKWATER	
SM CITY BACOR 417303	SM CITY FAIRVIEW 533713	SM CITY ILOILO 333422
1 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	1 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	1 MR. SUAVE
2 SCARY MOVIE 3	2 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	2 RESERVED
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	3 MASTER & COMMANDER	3 CHAVIT SINGSON
4 ELF	4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	4 THE PHONE
5 STAR RUNNER	5 CHAVIT SINGSON	5 DARK BLUE
6 MR. SUAVE	6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY	6 UPTOWN GIRLS
7 BABAE SA BREAKWATER	7 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS	7 RESERVED
8 OUT OF TIME	8 THE SPY	
		SM CITY MANILA 527214
SM CITY PAMPANGA 712015		1 STAR RUNNER
1 SCARY MOVIE 3		2 ELF
2 MR. SUAVE		3 OUT OF TIME
3 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2		4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
4 CHAVIT SINGSON		5 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
5 SEX SCANDAL		6 MASTER & COMMANDER
6 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS		7 LOONEY TUNES
		8 FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT 424015		9 THE GRUDGE
1 STAR RUNNER		10 SCARY MOVIE 3
2 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2		11 LOONEY TUNES
3 OUT OF TIME		12 BABAE SA BREAKWATER
4 ELF		
	SM CITY DAVAO 217558	
SM BICUTAN 712015	1 LOONEY TUNES	
1 OUT OF TIME	2 BELPHEGOR	
2 ELF	3 MR. SUAVE	
3 MR. SUAVE	4 AMERICAN PSYCHO 2	
4 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	5 THE SPY	
	6 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2	
	SM CITY LUCENA 0143710974-43	
SM CITY MARILAO	1 MASTER & COMMANDER	
1 LOONEY TUNES	2 THE WISHER	
2 MR. SUAVE	3 MR. SUAVE	
3 CHAVIT SINGSON	4 CHAVIT SINGSON	
4 SCARY MOVIE 3		
	SM CITY BAGUIO 0741464355	
	1 CHAVIT SINGSON	
	2 THE RUNDOWN	
	3 RESERVED	
	4 RESERVED	

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City • 638 9781 • 85



INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
12:00 FS/12:30 MF/2:35/4:40/6:45/8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END



ELF
11:35 FS/12:05 MF/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:45/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END

For Seat Reservation, call 833 8975 • LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee - P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday • Regular P120.00 • After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)
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THX / All Digital

1 OUT OF TIME 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:55	4 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
2 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2 11:35, 2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 9:35	5 STAR RUNNER 10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
3 FIGHTING TEMPTATION 11:00, 1:40, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00	6 THE GRUDGE 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00
7 BABAE SA BREAKWATER 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:55	9 SCARY MOVIE 3 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
8 LOONEY TUNES 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00	10 COLD CREEK MANOR 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

MATINEE PRICE: P100 THX cinema / P75 5level cinemas
Mon.-Fri. / 10am-4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita

526-7185
536-7809 to 12

1 STAR RUNNER - 10:30, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:50
2 THE GRUDGE - 11:00, 12:55, 2:45, 4:35, 6:25, 8:15, 10:00
3 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4 FIGHTING TEMPTATION - 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50
5 OUT OF TIME - 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40
6 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY - 10:10, 12:20, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10
7 JEEPERS CREEPERS - 11:15, 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 8:00, 10:00

Metro East

602-8193/09
602-8200

1 SCARY MOVIE 3
2 JEEPERS CREEPERS 2
3 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
4 OUT OF TIME
5 JEEPERS CREEPERS
6 STAR RUNNER
7 FIGHTING TEMPTATION
8 LOONEY TUNES

Novaliches

935-3229 / 31

1 LOONEY TUNES
2 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
3 OUT OF TIME
4 FIGHTING TEMPTATION
5 SCARY MOVIE 3
6 JEEPERS CREEPERS
7 STAR RUNNER
8 BABAE SA BREAKWATER

Malabon

288-0985/2575

MR. SUAVE 1	OUT OF TIME
BABAE SA BREAKWATER 2	STAR RUNNER
STAR RUNNER 3	BABAE SA BREAKWATER
OUT OF TIME 4	JEEPERS CREEPERS

Sta. Rosa

(049)837-0907

COLD CREEK MANOR 1	COLD CREEK MANOR
LOONEY TUNES 2	LOONEY TUNES
SEX SCANDAL 3	CHAVIT SINGSON STORY
MR. SUAVE 4	MR. SUAVE
FIGHTING TEMPTATION 5	WRONG TURN

Star Mills

(049)837-0907

LOONEY TUNES 1	JEEPERS CREEPERS
SEX SCANDAL 2	OUT OF TIME
MR. SUAVE 3	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS 4	FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS
JEEPERS CREEPERS 5	STAR RUNNER
SCARY MOVIE 3 6	BABAE SA BREAKWATER

Bacolod

(034)441-0458/59

THE SPY 1	THE SPY
LOONEY TUNES 2	UPTOWN GIRLS
MR. SUAVE 3	CHAVIT SINGSON STORY
GIGLI 4	LOONEY TUNES
LIBERATED 5	MR. SUAVE
BELPHEGOR 6	THE PHONE

Iloilo

(033)338-8070 to 78

THE SPY 1	THE SPY
LOONEY TUNES 2	UPTOWN GIRLS
MR. SUAVE 3	CHAVIT SINGSON STORY
GIGLI 4	LOONEY TUNES
LIBERATED 5	MR. SUAVE
BELPHEGOR 6	THE PHONE

In the BATTLE of the SEXES,
who will be the FIRST to BLUSH
and FALL in LOVE?

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Engage the enemy

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"INTERNET QUEEN" ALEX MCARTHEUR and JESSA LANO starring by GERALD L. WOLFF and JUAN GUERRA TRING by J. B. L. L.
production designer DAN STUTLER edited by DOMIN ARON alex screenplay by RANDALL FRANKS and CO. OUTLINE BY JAMES
music producer PETER JAY KAUSER JOSEPH DE POMPER and MARTIN L. BARAKAT produced by DANIEL BOWEN
produced and directed by MARK E. KATZ

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OF AGE AND ABOVE

DANIEL WASHINGTON

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THE GRUDGE
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DENZEL WASHINGTON CHAKARA YU

THE GRUDGE

a landmark re-released!

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DIGITAL
SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

1 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50 P13	2 ELF 11:25, 1:45, 4:05, 6:25, 8:50 GP
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LOONEY TUNES GP 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00	ELF 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40	INTOLERABLE CRUELTY PG13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10
JEEPERS CREEPERS R13 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00	FIGHTING TEMPTATIONS GP 11:50, 2:15, 4:40, 7:05, 9:30	OUT OF TIME R13 1:10, 3:25, 5:40, 7:55, 10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

People, Events & Products

Union Cement wins Asian CSR Policies Award

UNION Cement's Social Development and Management Program (SDMP) was awarded the Asian Best CSR Policies Award at the Asian CSR Forum on Corporate Social Responsibility 2003 held recently in Bangkok, Thailand. Union was chosen from among 142 entries from 80 organizations in 11 countries. The award was conferred by no less than the Prime Minister of Thailand, HE Thaksin Shinawatra and Ambassador Ramon del Rosario of the Asian Institute of Management - Ramon del Rosario Sr. Center for Corporate Responsibility.

Union's social development program was defined in partnership with local communities, detailing the com-

pany's five-year commitment to be actively involved in the local communities where it operates. The program includes providing basic services such as medical and health care services, nutrition, and sports activities and providing sustainable programs with emphasis on education for the less privileged children, livelihood to augment family incomes, and relevant infrastructure services.

To date, about two thousand families annually are benefiting from regular medical and health care programs; over 20 health/day centers have been built within and around Union's communities; an average 100 underprivileged children are sent to school annu-

ally and various livelihood programs have been established to help families increase their income. Union also works with various NGOs in providing shelter and water system programs in various communities.

Union Cement's CSR strategy is to focus its efforts so that the company is not just meeting legal requirements or appealing local interests but really contributing in a manner which makes a difference.

Union is a member of Holcim - one of the world's leading suppliers of cement as well as aggregates, concrete and construction-related services, with interests in over 70 countries in all continents.



FUN DAY FOR THE COLUMNS, AYALA AVENUE SALES TEAMS

Property specialists handling the sales of The Columns, Ayala Avenue hold a day of sports and fun at Dencio's in Fort Bonifacio. Shown in photo welcoming the sales groups is Angela de Villa Lacson, president of Community Innovations Inc., the Ayala Land subsidiary offering The Columns, a quality and

affordable residential condominium complex on Ayala Ave. corner Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. Tower Two units are now available after Tower One units sold out within three months in the market. For more details about The Columns, Ayala Avenue, please visit www.communityinnovations.com.ph.



SUMMER'S EVE SUPPORT LADY DRIVER IN 2003 ENDURO

Summer's Eve a woman's care product will be supporting Menchie Francisco in Goodyear Ducaro 4 hour Endurance car race. Francisco was the 2001 Novice Champion in the SVI Challenge Cup and has placed third in the Enduro in 2000. Joining her as co driver will be Joselu Romero Salas, a Miata Cup winner who will be bringing support from TNT - the European delivery service.

Berkley/Family First updates via text

PRE-NEED industry innovator Berkley International, together with sole distributor Family First Inc (FFI), has once more tapped technology in order to get closer to its customers. As part of the company's 100 percent delight creed, there is always the need to update customers about company news and developments.

And with a large population highly dependent on cellular phones, what better technology is there than SMS or Short Messaging Service, commonly known as text messaging. With the advance technology provided by Berkley/FFI's Information Systems Division (ISD), existing planholders are now able to receive the latest information as well as updates on products and services through their cellphones.

On its close to 6 years of operation in the country, Berkley has been awarded two consecutive Aplus ratings by Standard and Poor's local counterpart, Philratings, and has been in BusinessWorld's list of top 1000 corporations.

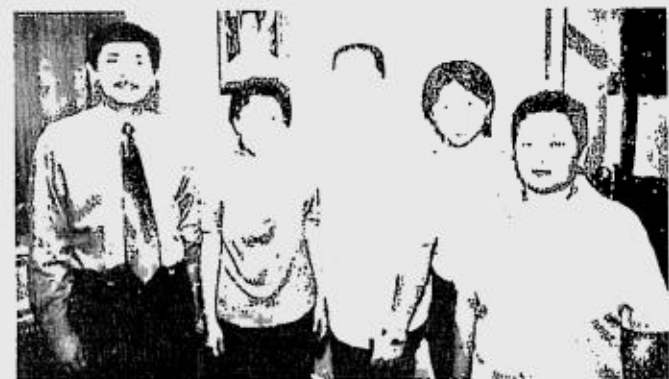
Entered: FEBRUARY 2003



'ADOPT A BARANGAY' PROJECT MOA SIGNING

Photo shows charter president Jejomar 'Jun Jun' Erwin Binay Jr. signing the memorandum of agreement on 'Adopt a Barangay' Project with president Roberto 'Bobby' Roxas of RC Makati Ayala and vice president Reynaldo Cruz of Yanib Foundation Inc. Olympia Chapter last Sept. 10 at

the Makati City Hall. Witnessing the event were (seated) kagawad Conrado Alvarez Jr., Ana Marie Nepomuceno, Alexander Dignos, Marjorie de Veyra, Rosario Gomez, Edgardo Collado, president elect Mario 'Boy' Cañizares and engineer Ernesto Aspillaga.



POWERDANCE CELEBRATES 16TH ANNIVERSARY

The country's premiere in jazz and contemporary dance, the Douglas Nierras Powerdance, celebrated its 16th anniversary concert entitled 'Love, Powerdance' recently at the Aliv Theatre, Star City Complex, Pasay City. The said event embarked a momentous performance, touching hearts of many Filipino audiences most especially the students from less fortunate public schools who were sponsored by the

Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO). Shown are (from left) Manuel Garcia, public relations manager - PCSO; chair Ma. Livia 'Honeygirl' Singson-de Leon - PCSO; Douglas Nierras - artistic director and choreographer of the Douglas Nierras Powerdance; Jaymee Que, marketing coordinator - Douglas Nierras Powerdance and Corie dela Cruz, production coordinator - Douglas Nierras Powerdance.

DWCU reunion, Class 1973

THE DIVINE Word College of Urdaneta Alumni Association, Class of 1973 will be celebrating its DWCU 30th Anniversary of Class 1973 on Saturday, Dec. 13, at 4 p.m. at the DWCU Gym Urdaneta City. Classmates, teachers and friends of the batch are requested to join the get-together after 3 decades to reminisce, renew, re-live, re-unite, remember, feel young, or simply have fun. Celebrations will continue until the following day, Sunday, Dec. 14 at the Goldland Resort Hotel, Baranag Cayambanan, Urdaneta City. brand new air-conditioned rooms are available for reservations. For more inquiries, contact the following: Searl Mamilio-Nerza at 0918-5393328/913-5954; Elpidio Angeles Jr. at 0917-7953443/0916-8004; Lorenza Serafica at 0919-8161944/438-5285; Marilyn Sarga-Mararac at 0916-4920185; or Jose Divina at 0917-2056174.

AIM holds Recruiters' Networking Night

THE ASIAN Institute of Management will be holding its annual Recruiters' Networking Night on Dec. 10, 5:30 p.m. at the J. V. del Rosario Room, fourth floor of the AIM Conference Center (ACCM), Makati City, with the theme "AIM's New Masters: Asian Management Experts for the Global Economy". It is spearheaded by the Career Management Services office of the Washington SyCip Graduate School of Business Management (WSGSB). Participating companies include: Ayala Land, Bank of Philippine Islands, Citibank, Colgate-Palmolive, DHL, Globe Telecom, Johnson & Johnson, Levi's, L'Oreal, Procter & Gamble, Rustan's, Schering-Plough, and Standard Chartered Bank. For more details, contact Edythe Bautista or Rona Sialongo of WSGSB at 894-0043, or 892-4011 ext. 209, 231.

Santa Claus comes to Shang

SANTA Claus comes to the Shang this holiday season. This Christmas, Santa's nook will open every weekend of December at The 5th, level 5 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at the Shang. Kids and kids at heart are a welcome visit to Santa. And for a more relaxed shopping pace, Shangri-La Plaza is now open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. until Dec. 23. you can now enjoy shopping at your own leisure as you complete your Yuletide list. For more information, call 633-7851.

Blue Room Party at The Podium

CHILL out as the Blue Room Party takes off on Dec. 10, 8 p.m., at the Lounge in The Podium. Filipino-Canadian DJs Wendell Garcia and Erik Mana bring new, soulful, eclectic, and relaxing music from the Blue Room album to the mall. Blue Room Twilight, is a compilation of chill out music that quenches the soul, sets the mood, brings people together and soothes you when you're alone. It has elements of deep-house, down-tempo, nu-jazz and neo-soul.

NREA Awards Night

THE NATIONAL Real Estate Association (NREA) will tender an Honor Dinner and Awards Night to both its outgoing and incoming sets of officers and member of its board of trustees on Dec. 10, 6 p.m. at Ylang-ylang Hall of Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan, Metropolitan Manila. The occasion will also usher in the new set of officers. NREA members and guests are requested to come in Christmas attire and to bring gifts for the traditional exchange. New members will be inducted. For particulars, call NREA secretariat at 912-3492 or 913-4463.



MAYOR HAGEDORN INKS MOA WITH UNDP

Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn (2nd from left) shakes hands with Pratibha Mehta, resident representative, UNDP, after signing the MOA on Community Development and Mobilization for Forest Development and Protection at the Unicef conference room in Neda

Makati. With its project partner, Tagbaya Foundation Inc, the project site will be in Sitio Kayasan, Brgy. Tagabinet, Puerto Princesa. Also in photo are: Dr. Arsenio Balisacan, director, Serca; Hagedorn; Mehta; Luc Vandebon, Charge d' affaires a.i. EC Delegation, Phils and Fr. Francis Lucas.

ProductFiles

Let your beauty shine

THESE days, diamonds are changing the way women (and men) look. You used to think that diamonds could only make you look good as accessories. Now as a skin care treatment, you'll know it can make you look your best. Facial Care Centre introduces Diamond Peel - the most advanced microdermabrasion treatment that sloughs away dead cells to effectively regenerate your skin. Diamond Peel is ideal for the treatment of the following skin conditions: aging fine lines around the eyes, forehead, corner of the lips, and other areas of your face; acne scars; cosmetic surgery scars; hyperpigmented skin; sun-damaged skin; age spots; blackheads and whiteheads; oily skin; as well as enlarged and clogged pores. Now with a dramatic improvement in your skin, you can actually say that diamonds are really your best friend. Call the Facial Care Center at 815-2539 for a free consultation.



AJGEP PRESENTS PLAQUE OF APPRECIATION TO SEC PAGDANGANAN

Sec. Roberto 'Obet' Pagdanganan (center) is shown, being presented with a plaque of appreciation by the officers of the Association of Junior Geodetic Engineers of the Phils (Ajgep). Shown from left are engineer Bayani Caguioa, Frank Cale, Obet Pagdanganan, president Eldred Tumbocon, engineer Reynaldo Carpio (chair-Luzon), Janet

Co (vice president). Ajgep has recently found success with the promulgation of RA 9200 and the recent signing of Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) by PRC chair Antonietta Fortunato and paves the way for the more than 5700 junior geodetic engineers upgrading to full pledge geodetic engineers without examination.

Republic of the Philippines Province of Cebu

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Interested manufacturers are hereby invited to apply for eligibility and to submit bids for the supply of 5,700 pcs. Monobloc elementary school tablet armchairs and 5,700 pcs. Monobloc secondary school tablet armchairs charged against the Provincial School Board Funds drawn under PR#03-2919 dated 10-26-03, ALOBS #200-03-10-187 with an approved budget of Php5,000,000.00 to be distributed to the different public schools in the Province of Cebu.

In order to qualify for participation in the public bidding, the bidders should conform to the eligibility criteria as prescribed under Section 23.6 of the approved IRR-A of Republic Act No. 9184.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents and request for quotation will be available for issuance on December 2-8, 2003 within the government prescribed office hours at BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City, upon payment of Php100.00 per request for quotation which is not refundable.

Closing date for issuance of the eligibility and bid forms, tender documents and request for quotation will be on December 7, 2003 at BAC Secretariat. Pre-bidding conference will be conducted on December 8, 2003 at 10:00 A.M. at the Conference Room, Office of the Provincial Governor. Attendance is compulsory and failure to attend shall mean disqualification during the actual bidding. Bidding date will be on December 22, 2003 at 10:00 A.M. at Conference Room, Governor's Office, Capitol Bldg., Cebu City.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the government.

For more information, please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone numbers 253-9614 / 253-3995.

This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. HABIN
Provincial Budget Officer
Chairman

(POI-Dec. 1 & 9, 2003)

ERRATUM

This ad was supposed to come out in this paper last Sunday, December 7, 2003, but due to some technical problems encountered, was rescheduled today.

— Our Apologies

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Cubao 3.8M Studio Lady 9132224

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Whoever
 finds
 his life
 will
 lose it,
 and
 whoever
 loses
 his
 life
 for my
 sake
 will
 find it.

Matthew 10:39

"For God
 so loved
 the world,
 that He
 gave His
 only
 begotten
 Son,
 that
 whoever
 believes
 in Him
 shall not
 perish
 but
 have
 everlasting
 life."

John 3:16

In Loving Memory
 on the First Death Anniversary of
 Our Dearest Daddy

ROMEO JACINTO ASUNCION

Masses will be offered today
 December 9, 2003
 in the following Churches

St. James the Great 5:00 p.m.
 Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City
 Immaculate Concepcion 6:00 a.m.
 Pasig City
 St. Jerome Emiliani 6:00 a.m.
 Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City
 St. Claire 6:00 a.m.
 Cabuyao, Laguna
 Santuario de San Antonio 12:15 p.m.
 Forbes Park, Makati City
 Christ the King 7:00 a.m.
 Valleverde, Pasig City
 St. Joseph Parish (Bamboo Organ) 6:00 p.m.
 Poblacion, Las Piñas City
 Sta. Rita of Casia 7:30 a.m.
 Baclaran, Parañaque City

BGEN. VICTOR RIMANDO
OBILLO PA (RET)

PMA CLASS 1966

PASSED AWAY IN THE GRACE OF
 OUR LORD JESUS ON DECEMBER 7, 2003.

His loving wife ESTELITA; children MILDRED and DAVE,
 VICTUS and MYRA, DRs. LESTER and KIT, OLIVER and
 SHERLY; grandchildren SHEKINAH, ALEXI and HADRIEL;
 mother CEFERINA; brother ATTY. MACARIO JR.; sisters
 GLORIA and DR. ESTER; relatives and friends request
 everyone to rejoice with them at his return to our Creator.

His remains lie in state at the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani Mortuary
 Chapel Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, December 11, 2003 at the
 Libingan Ng Mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

JESUS L. SIAN

PASSED AWAY IN THE
 GRACE OF OUR LORD ON
 DECEMBER 6, 2003.

HIS LOVING WIFE ROSALINA; SISTER
 CONCEPCION; BROTHERS AND SISTERS-
 IN-LAW, NEPHEWS, NIECES, REQUEST
 THE PIOUS READERS TO PRAY FOR THE
 ETERNAL REPOSE OF HIS SOUL.

HIS REMAINS LIE IN STATE AT ST. PETER
 MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC. AT 296
 QUEZON AVENUE, Q.C.

Engr. LARRY C. SANTOS

Peacefully joined our Lord
 on December 03, 2003, at the age of 40.

His bereaved wife Irene L. Santos;
 children Marion and Mariel; Mother
 Inocencia C. Santos; sisters Yolly, Baby, Gie;
 brother Noel; in-laws, relatives and friends
 request the pious readers to pray for the eternal
 repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Chapel D
 Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati
 City.

Cremation is on December 11, 2003 at 5 PM
 at Loyola Memorial Chapels Inc. Guadalupe,
 Makati City.

REMEDIOS "INANG"
GALANG-YÑIGUEZ

OF MALOLOS, BULACAN AND DAVAO CITY

Passed away in the Grace of Our Lord
 on December 6, 2003 at the age of 72.

her beloved husband, JOHNNY

children : JUFORT, MANOLO (†) & LIC-LIC,
 ARNIE (†) & ELSA, BONG & TESSIE,
 CORRIE & RAUL

grandchildren : BINKY & ERNIE, BANG-BANG (†),
 JINGGAY, NOVA, BOYEN,
 BONG-BONG & ETHEL, BINGLE,
 BEL-BEL, BUBUT & RACHEL, BOBBIE
 & GRACELYN, BOYET, BJ, BON-BON,
 BONJIE, BOVINZ & BEA.

sisters : NORMA & NENENG

faithful ward : CITA

REQUEST THE PIOUS READERS TO PRAY FOR THE
 ETERNAL REPOSE OF HER SOUL.

HER REMAINS LIE IN STATE AT PIETA CHAPEL,
 COSMOPOLITAN MEMORIAL CHAPELS, DAVAO CITY.
 INTERMENT WILL BE AT DAVAO MEMORIAL PARK
 ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2003 AFTER THE
 2:00 P.M. MASS AT THE SAN PEDRO CATHEDRAL.

Jose "Peping" de la Peña

son of Epifanio de la Peña and Placida Maclang,
 died peacefully on December 4, 2003, at home, in
 San Francisco, CA. He was born on May 3, 1916 in
 Bulacan then moved to Pura, Tarlac where he spent most of
 his childhood and early adulthood.

Peping married Salad Yutuc (deceased) and moved his
 family to Manila where he practiced as a lawyer. He also had
 a long, distinguished career with the Bureau of Internal
 Revenue. Upon his retirement, he joined his family in the
 United States.

He was a beloved father to son, Pepito (deceased), and
 daughters; Patty, Linda, Tess, Boots, Socky, Connie and
 Woody. Peping enjoyed his 9 grandchildren, 4 great-
 grandchildren, and 2 sons-in-law.

He will be buried at the Holy Cross Cemetery in Colma, CA
 on December 8th. He will be missed by his family and friends
 both in the United States and the Philippines.

TARCIANA MORALES MAXINO

Peacefully joined her Creator on December 6, 2003 at the age of 92.

Her children Ofelia & Lindy; Jazmin & Manny (†).
 Drs. Lirio & Efrain; Mayor Den & Yay; Engr. Wil & Evan;
 her grandchildren and her great grandchildren request to pray for
 the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Our Lady of Beautiful Love Chapel of the
 Resurreccion, Merville, Parañaque until December 12, 2003.

Interment will be in Mulanay Memorial Park, Mulanay, Quezon.

We remember...

NICOLAS LAYGO CUENCA

and

CRISTINA MAGSAYSAY CUENCA

whose birth anniversaries fall on December 6 and 15
 respectively.

Masses will be offered for the repose of their souls at the

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish,
 N. Garcia St. cor. Kalayaan Ave., Makati
 on Dec. 15, 12:15 and 6:30 pm Masses.

The family they left behind ask their friends and relatives to
 join them in loving prayer.

"Eternal life will swallow up that
 which can die. God made us for
 this very reason and He has given
 us the Spirit as a guarantee
 that we will live again."

2 Cor. 5:4-5

When life reaches its sunset,
 it doesn't mean the end of a journey;
 it marks a new beginning of eternal
 peace. Rise up and take God's hand.

Gone but not forgotten, deep in
 our hearts, we carry our loved-ones'
 memories to a special tomorrow
 when we will be united again... one
 at heart and one in heaven.

Our loving sympathies.

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BUSINESS

Politics hampering Asian oil selloff

SINGAPORE—The restructuring and ensuing privatization of Asia's oil firms will be slow while governments, which are reluctant to give up strong cash flows, also fear big job losses and subsidy cuts could cost votes and anger unions.

Privatizing firms in countries such as India, South Korea, Indonesia and the Philippines, will be difficult in 2004 as elections are due, analysts say.

Privatizing oil firms could also inflate domestic fuel costs as governments need to cut subsidies on

oil products to create a level playing field.

"It seems that there is a consensus that the way to the future is privatization. But things are moving very slowly," said Hassaan Vahidy, the lead analyst in Singapore for energy consultants FACTS Inc.

Prerequisites

"If you want to privatize, one of the prerequisites is that the subsidies have to go. But removing subsidies is a sensitive issue." Privatization is seen as a crucial step to boosting competition and

eventually the efficiency of state companies.

But the need to privatize oil assets, which are in hot demand thanks to high oil prices and rapidly growing oil demand in Asia, is not seen as urgent by governments.

Asia imports 60 percent of its daily crude needs of about 21 million barrels. Most comes from the Middle East. Concerns about supply security have also slowed privatization in some countries such as South Korea.

But Asian energy bankers, who

have experienced a drought of deals in recent years, are hoping for breakthroughs in Pakistan, Taiwan and India in the next two years.

"I think the pace of oil industry privatization in Asia will certainly quicken because it can't get much slower. But I don't really see it going crazy," said David Anderson, managing director and head of Asia-Pacific Energy Group at CSFB.

Quicker but not frantic

The Pakistani government is expected to sell a 51 percent

stake in Pakistan State Oil, the country's largest oil marketing firm, in early 2004, said Kenneth Quinn, head of Asia oil/gas banking for JP Morgan.

But bidders are few. And one of them is Pakistan's Fauji Foundation group, a local organization run by retired military officials for the welfare of retired army personnel.

Taiwan would likely move to privatize its dominant refiner, Chinese Petroleum Corp. (CPC), late next year after its presidential election, Quinn said.

Biggest deal

If it happens, it would be the largest oil privatization deal in Asia over the next two years. But a CPC official said the deal was not yet on the horizon due to disputes with the union which represents CPC's more than 15,000 employees.

Wu Hsueh-chih, a director at the Ministry of Economic Affairs which is overseeing the privatization, said the union would not accept layoffs or pay cuts as part of any privatization package. *Reuters*

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BIR sees P2.8B in back taxes from used car importers

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue hopes to collect some P2.8 billion in back taxes from importers of second-hand vehicles following the recent lifting by the Court of Appeals of the injunction on the collection of value added tax on used vehicles sold through Subic and other freeport zones.

The estimated back taxes were based on the average VAT of P35,000 per unit of vehicle and the 80,000 units of used vehicles registered with the Department of Transportation and Communication since 1999.

The injunction was issued earlier by the Olongapo City Regional Trial Court in response to the complaint filed by Asia International Auctioneers and Subic Bay Motors Corp. against the shift in the basis of VAT collection from the landed price of the vehicle to the bid price.

The collection of taxes on used cars will apply only to those that have already entered the country prior to October this year, when a separate injunction on the ban on importation of second hand vehicles was also lifted.

Local car assemblers, for their part, said the collection of back taxes on imported used cars as well as the banning of their importation will help encourage the car industry to boost local production.

Ford Motor Co. president Henry Co earlier said that moves to discourage used vehicle importation will help the local industry and the government to realize the objective of making the country one of the major car production hubs in the region.

He said, however, that local car makers want to make sure that the law banning the importation of second-hand vehicles was strictly enforced.

The recent passage of the bill shifting the basis of collection of excise tax on motor vehicles from engine displacement to value was considered as one of the major achievements of the government in pushing for the development of the local car industry.

RP taps China market for coconut fiber

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINES plans to fully develop the coconut fiber sector as part of its plan to grab a big slice of the large Chinese export market.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the Philippines plans to export between 200 and 250 metric tons of coconut fiber to China next year, a significant increase from the current level of 175 metric tons.

This came after the Philippines successfully concluded a trade mission to China where Filipino suppliers promoted their coconut products to Chinese buyers.

The DTI was also confident that the Philippines would acquire a bigger slice of the market as the coconut fiber sector continues to develop and additional

"We have to take advantage of the China market, which has limited sources of coconut fiber and has very few competing products and supplier countries," said Roxas in a statement.

The trade chief said the country should take the opportunity to grow the local coconut fiber industry by investing in equipment, such as coconut fiber drying machines, and enhancing the collection of coconut husk to boost production.

Meanwhile, local firm Cocotechnologies Inc. said it would be exporting more coconut products to China following the signing of a memorandum of understanding with Chinese firm Guangzhao Rivers Enterprise Co. Ltd.

Under the deal, Cocotech will supply coconut coir, geotextiles, mats, biologs and coconut peat to Rivers Enterprise, which is engaged in slope protection and rehabilitation. The coconut products will be used for soil erosion control.

REAL ESTATE

Squatter proliferation worsens LLDA garbage dumping woes

By Jerry Esplanada

(Last of two parts)

LUPANG Arenda in Taytay, Rizal should not have been designated as resettlement site for Metro Manila squatters, asserted officials of the Laguna Lake Development Authority.

"Mainly because it is part of Laguna de Bay shoreland," pointed out engineer Jun Paul Mistica, head of LLDA's special concerns division.

Shoreland areas are "inundated by flood waters up to eight months a year," making them "not suited for human habitation," Mistica noted.

The Taytay squatter resettlement program was covered by Presidential Proclamation 704, issued on Nov. 28, 1995 by then President Fidel Ramos.

Opposed

The LLDA had opposed at its very onset the Malacañang directive which set aside the shoreland for supposedly a "socialized housing project."

Lupang Arenda, which has expanded from 80 to more than 170 hectares, is now home to more than 25,000 families, many of whom are squatters belonging to at least 24 "homeowners associations."

The alleged proliferation of professional squatters in Lupang Arenda has complicated LLDA's initial garbage- and soil-dumping woes.

LLDA head Calixto Cataquiz has pointed out that Sec. 41 of Republic Act 4850, which created the LLDA, bans on Laguna de Bay shoreland housing projects and subdivisions; garbage dumpsites; factories, piggery farms, quarrying, and all other activities that may cause pollution and other ecological disturbances to the bay.

Management program

The LLDA, however, has come up with a "management program" which allows shoreland lease for recreational use (provided no permanent structures are constructed); tree farming; agriculture (provided the application of fertilizers and pesticides is regulated and based on standards set by the Department of Agriculture and the Pesticides Authority); fishpond operation (provided that no exotic species are introduced to lake waters); poultry but limited to backyard scale; dockyards, boat sheds, fish ports, research facilities and other uses that will not disturb the lake's ecological balance.

In the program brochure, the LLDA acknowledged that "rapid industrial growth, industrial expansion, aggravated congestion in the Metro Manila and Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) and unchecked infrastructure development have exposed the Laguna de Bay shoreland to continuous encroachment,

illegal reclamation, quarrying and even unsafe farming practices.

"It has become a sanctuary for informal settlers, a disposal site for domestic and industrial waste and the subject of social clashes due to land tenure and ownership conflicts."

Public land

Under the country's laws on natural resources, all land adjacent to bodies of water are classified as public land. "Therefore, any portion of the lake's shoreland cannot be titled or disposed," said the same brochure.

Apparently, no Palace consultation with the LLDA had taken place prior to the issuance of PP 704.

But PP 704 did not prevent the LLDA from looking into the Lupang Arenda controversy.

Open defiance of orders

During an inquiry conducted last year by the House of Representatives' ecology panel, the LLDA assailed the alleged illegal garbage-dumping and backfilling operations of IPM Trading and Development Corp. in Lupang Arenda, which it said were "detrimental to the lake environment" and "in direct violation of LLDA Board Resolution 23."

Another LLDA charge: IPM's dumping area "falls within the 12.5-meter elevation which is the lake's buffer zone."

The waste management firm's alleged "open defiance of LLDA orders and complete disregard of the public outcry to stop its wanton and deliberate disposal of garbage materials" prompted the agency to issue a cease and desist order.

Summons were repeatedly sent to IPM for public hearings in November 2001 and January 2002, "but IPM representatives failed to appear on all occasions," recalled Mistica.

But IPM officials insisted no environmental laws were violated. They also claimed that even before IPM came into the picture, parts of Lupang Arenda were already used as open dumpsite.

"Why blame us for everything? We're just the contractor. Arenda settlers asked for our help and we obliged. There's even an agreement between them and President Macapagal-Arroyo. The project was issued a permit by DENR. The settlers asked the LLDA for a clearance, but it didn't act on it," explained IPM vice president Dwight Ramos.

At this writing, the multiagen-

cy Task Force Arenda which the DENR set up to stop illegal dumping of garbage on Lupang Arenda has ceased to function.

Meanwhile, reports reaching the LLDA said dumping of filling materials has continued in some parts of Lupang Arenda.

The NGO (nongovernment organization) Society for the Conservation of Philippine Wetlands and Unilever Philippines only learned about the issue recently, not before the country's largest

GARBAGE dumped on swampy areas in preparation for squatter housing construction

lake's admission to the prestigious Living Lakes global network in August 2001.

Eight years after the issuance of PP 704, Lupang Arenda's actual boundaries have yet to be properly established, according to the LLDA.

Citing the "alarming loss and destruction of the lake's natural buffer zone," the LLDA's special concerns division stressed the "urgent need to acquire critical information on the current state of the shoreland."

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang



GARBAGE dumped on swampy areas in preparation for squatter housing construction

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Edsa Central gets a makeover

WHEN EDSA Central opened in the '70s, it pioneered the concept of a "midway mall" where travelers who commuted to their offices from their homes could make a convenient stop before completing their journey. The shopping complex was accessible to the public—literally, since the establishment was not "out-of-the-way"—as it was built where people actually converged daily, and figuratively, because it offered value shopping and entertainment to a broad market.

Two decades later, newer, sleeker malls have mushroomed in the area and new generations of shoppers have been bred. The good ol' emporium at the crossing is now ripe for change. This year-end, Edsa Central is beginning a new, exciting phase: the 8-hectare development has undergone a major makeover that will showcase the newly renovated Edsa Central Station Mall; a wet market to service subdivisions in the Mandaluyong district; a spruced up Jeepney Park and the latest addition to the center, the Edsa Central Bazaar.

City landmark

The Edsa Central was built and is being managed by one of the country's leading real estate developers, Greenfield Development Corp. At a time when the area consisted of patches of cogo-

nal lands and a few office buildings, the shopping plaza at the corner of Shaw Boulevard and Edsa became a city landmark as thousands of people passed by the area for their daily commute. Today, even if the New Edsa Central is no longer Mandaluyong's only commercial and entertainment capital, its loyalists, as well as new generation shoppers can expect to be treated to a pleasurable shopping experience.

Air-conditioned boutiques will be housed at the New Edsa Central Mall to give shoppers more choices: there's the global sports brand Nike, Dickies fashion label for the young and the hip, Wrangler, Otto Shoes, Bench and more specialty shops. More than 3,000 sq m of space on the second level will be appropriated for the fastfood area where diners can enjoy delicious



NEW generation shoppers can expect to be treated to a pleasurable shopping experience at the new Edsa Central.

and satisfying snacks and entrees. Those who prefer an al fresco setting can have a meal at the food court's balcony that looks out over the entire Edsa Central Complex.

Oasis for tired travelers

The Jeepney Park is an open-air commercial strip to serve as an oasis for tired travelers. It can now accommodate more fleets of public jeepneys, buses and FX taxis, aside from fastfood outlets, service centers and shops that offer

items at bargain-basement prices. The wet market, which is the only one of its kind in the business district, is where residents of nearby villages and subdivisions can go to buy fresh provisions. Reinforced frosted glass windows, curved high ceilings, and a fountain lend an expansive, airy feel to the new mall. Bridges and walkways interconnect spaces inside the mall and provide a link to the MRT.

An activity center and a chapel are also being planned.

What makes the New Edsa Central truly exciting is that it mixes old world simplicity with new era innovation and comfort. For traffic-weary people, it is a sort of "halfway place" that lets one take a breather from the hassle and drudgery of public transportation. But it never lets you forget the more important things in life—like grabbing a *pasalubong* for the kids, relaxed shopping and dining before traveling that last leg of your journey back home.

Creba's 3 decades: Epochs and prime movers

By Pedro C. Tario
Contributor

THE 30TH anniversary celebration of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (Creba) might as well be a grand coming-out party. Not for fanfare and flamboyant festivity, but for reflecting on Creba's mission and what it has done.

Has Creba made a significant impact and influence on the lives of Filipinos? Is this epoch truly worth its high place in the history of the country's real estate and building industry?

In the early seventies, rapid population began taking its toll on government's efforts for housing and urban development. Manila and other cities began being beset with the problems of squatting, slums, housing projects with scarce water supply and inadequate basic services, inefficient garbage collection and substandard sewerage system.

The government could not do the gargantuan task of solving these problems alone. "The private sector had to lend a hand," a hardworking lawyer thought to himself as he pondered on how "relevant was his life to the industry and the country in his own time," according to an account by a former Creba president, lawyer Carlos A. Ranases. That man was lawyer Manuel M. Serrano.

Catalyzing realty, housing dev't

As architects, urban planners and environmentalists drew up plans to decongest Manila

and other crowded cities, Serrano set out to spearhead an advocacy group that would serve as a catalyst for real estate and housing development. While urban planners tinkered with the idea of eliminating urban sprawl and relocating inner-city residences to suburban areas, the crusading lawyer seriously considered working on legislation that would address the housing shortage and other related problems permanently. This, he thought, called for people who would have the zeal to work cohesively and ardently over and above personal motives and interests.

Serrano met with 15 industry leaders to formally organize a group that was to be named Creba. They were Antonio Avelilla, Luis Bernasconi, Victor Buencamino Jr., Cesar Caliwara, Demetrio Capuyoc, Rosendo Donida, Mariano Goce, Oscar Ilustre, Octavio Kalalo, Mariano Lucero, Ariston Nakpil, Romulo Reyes, Victorio Soliven, Artemio Valencia, and Rodolfo Valencia. These were the people who pioneered a period of cooperation between the private sector and government.

Advocacy programs

The organization embarked on advocacy projects that would put in place basic administrative, regulatory and finance infrastructure for massive housing production led by the private sector. Creba aimed at minimizing the enormous housing problems with a long-range goal of driving the engine of economic growth toward productivity and prosperity.

While urban planners tinkered with the idea of eliminating urban sprawl and relocating inner-city residences to suburban areas, the crusading lawyer seriously considered working on legislation that would address the housing shortage and other related problems

During the first three years, Creba confronted the task like a long-distance runner making an arduous, uphill climb. The complexity of running a lobby organization with different levels of interests was taxing and daunting. Seeking help from the legislature was a complicated and toilsome job as government regulations could make or break industries.

Armed with sheer determination and an indomitable spirit, Creba was able to post a number of significant accomplishments. Among the numerous laws, rules, regulations and policies credited to the organization are: 1) the creation of the National Housing Authority or NHA to redeem mass housing from the "clout of local politics"; 2) the construction of the water mains in Manila; 3) the enforcement of the Subdivision and Condominium Buyers' Protection Decree which curbs malpractices in condominium construction; 4) the creation of a quasi-judicial body, the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board or HLURB, to streamline the regulatory process; 5) the enactment of the Socialized Housing Act; 6) the creation of a home-financing mechanism called the Pag-Ibig Fund; 7) the establishment of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. to augment funds for socialized and low-cost housing; 8) the proposal to create the Department of Housing under the Omnibus Housing and Urban Development Act of 2001; and, 9) the proposal (Housing Bill 545) to create local housing boards in every city and municipality.

Creba's other advocacy programs include land access, land use and conversion, improvement of basic services, setting up of mechanisms for the control of interest rates, taxation and revenue measures, and schemes that would trim the bureaucratic red tape in the documentation process for socialized housing.

Proposals to legislature and government administrations, past and present, are supported by in-depth studies and extensive consultations with the different sectors in the housing industry. Creba regularly meets with officials of government agencies, particularly the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, Department of Agrarian Reform, Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Creba has also been working with five other private builders and developers groups on a common pledge to deliver 500,000 socialized and low-cost housing units to ease the present housing backlog.

Other business concerns

Fighting graft and corruption in the government is another serious concern that compels Creba to join the Business Against Graft and Corruption movement and take an active role in its action programs.

Training and education are also given due

attention. Creba has partnered with the College of St. Benilde-La Salle University for a test run for a diploma program in real estate management. The first batch of students graduated in September 2003.

Another project is the Computerized Land Information Management System or CLAIMS, a mechanism for efficient and reliable land information management and titling system.

Bullish on the international market, Creba has also made a debut on the global scene. With the incorporation of the Creba International Foundation Inc., international chapters have been formed with the help of Filipino expatriates in the United States, Canada, Europe and Asia. A component of this effort is Creba's Philippine Property Catalogue, a handbook for duly licensed real estate projects that could serve the needs of the international market.

Local chapters

Deemed as the lifeblood of the organization, local chapters are organized and reactivated nationwide. Creba hosts seminars, visitations and consensus-based forums to foster active and competent chapter participation in national projects and events.

New chapters have just been organized. The latest addition are the Tuguegarao chapter, known as the Northwest Luzon Chapter in Cagayan Valley, comprising Batanes, Cagayan, Kalinga and Apayao; the Bulacan Chapter and Rizal Chapter (Central and Eastern Luzon), and Bicol North and South Chapters (Bicol region). The newest chapter is the Zamboanga Chapter in Mindanao.

National presidents

Creba's national presidents serve as the overseers of all national and chapter programs and activities. Deserving honors in Creba's history for serving as national president are Manuel Serrano (1973-1976), Antonio S. Dimalanta (1977), Victorio Soliven (1978), architect Nathaniel Von Einsiedel (1979-1980), Amado S. Bagatsing (1981-1982 and 1986), Arsenio L. de Castro (1983), Antonio A. Turalba (1984-1985), Razul Z. Requejo (1987-1988), Charlie Gorayeb (1989, 1990, September-December 1994, 1995, 1998 and 2001), Pete C. Tario (1991-1992), Domingo D. de Vera (1993), Porthos Alma Jose (January-August 1994), Carlos A. Ranases (1996), Jerry Navarrete (1997), Jaime Cura (1999-2000), and Florentino S. Dulalia (2002).

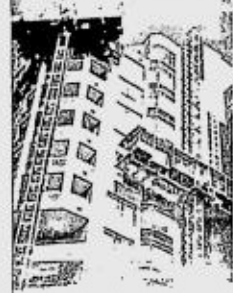
Creba's 30 years of struggle and advocacy find true meaning in this quotation from the late President Elpidio Quirino: "Every epoch has its own heroes and every hero has his own epoch."

Life seems to be just beginning at age 30 for Creba as it steps into a new era, raring to take on new challenges with fresh hopes, zeal, vigor and enthusiasm.

(Pedro Tario is currently presidential adviser and former president of Creba.)

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LEADING the time capsule rites signaling the construction of the Daphne unit in the community are project group head Lucille Valley, sales team head Greece Pompa, John M. Reyna and Reginald Alabe of business development group. Also present is engineer Norman Bislumbre, sector head of construction management group as well as project engineers.

Grand open house in Eastville Cainta

REAL estate developer Filinvest Land Inc. recently launched the Daphne house model during its grand open house in its Eastville community on Marcos Highway in Cainta, Rizal.

Combining form and function into one affordable package, the 144-square-meter Daphne is the home of choice for growing families. Its efficient floor plan creates a free-flowing layout, giving one plenty of space and the freedom to expand as the need arises.

Home features include three bedrooms, two common toilet and bath, living room, dining room, kitchen, laundry area, roof deck and provisions for a garage and a porch or lanai.

The Daphne is one of the many homes produced under the banner of the Corte Bella division of Filinvest Land Inc. Master-planned communities of Corte Bella are located in the center of residential developments. Urban professionals have the advantage of enjoying the metropolitan lifestyle without leaving the city.

Furthermore, the Eastville community can now have a faster way of getting around town as it is easily accessible through the MRT line, which starts at Santolan station on Marcos Highway. Getting to Edsa Cubao will only take 15 minutes.

For those interested in buying a home in Eastville, call 721-0771.

Is a used home worth buying?

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

BUYING a used home can be a real estate investment option. In doing so, one should be extra careful to look at the fine details since the parts and components of the home may have been worn out and are no longer functional.

Listed here are the advantages, as well as the disadvantages of buying a used home.

Advantages

Buying a used home offers many advantages:

BUILDING DREAMS

• **Used homes are more affordable.**—The main reason people buy used cars is their lower acquisition cost. A four-year-old car would cost at least 30 percent less as compared with the price of a new one. A similar analogy holds true for used homes. The primary advantage of buying a used home is the lower investment cost required. Due to the economic depreciation of homes, they are cheaper to buy than new homes. If new homes sell for P20,000 per square meter of improvement, used homes can be bought for a fraction of new home costs.

• **Used homes are located in existing communities.**—Used homes are located in existing communities with most of the basic necessities. These conveniences include grocery stores, schools and public transportation.

• **Used homes bring memories of the past.**—Many of us are attached to the past. That is the reason we see a lot of people collecting Volkswagen cars as well as Beatles memorabilia. The same is true with homes. One may want to have those old Vigan tiles and the very thick narra planks on the second floor that squeak each time you walk on them. Old capiz windows that constantly create noise during the storm season offer something not found in new homes. Old homes also help us remember the way it was when we were children.

Some fanatics even buy a complete old home, tear it down and build it in a different location.

• **Used homes can be 'loaded' properties.**—A used car will probably have three sets of seat covers, all of the gadgets like a CD changer and amplifier that were all installed by the previous owner. For a used home, it usually has all of the extras that cannot be found in a new one. This includes landscaping, curtains, window blinds, fences and the like.

Disadvantages

There is no such thing as a one-sided deal. If there are advantages into buying a used home, there are of course disadvantages:

• **Used homes are more expensive to maintain.**—Lots appreciate but homes depreciate. In a used home, the electrical systems, water line and drainage systems get the first bout with wear and tear. With time, water lines leak, drainage systems get broken and electrical systems need rework to accommodate the additional load requirements.

• **Used homes may have an outmoded style.**—Homes built decades ago possess the style and character of its time. This may include adobe stone accents, single-sloped roofs and open gardens with a single car garage. This style may appeal to some but are no longer the style being used in newly built homes.

• **Used homes may have a bad layout.**—Notice old homes and you may see a four-bedroom house with a single bathroom. Large homes these

Some fanatics even buy a complete old home, tear it down and build it in a different location

days practically have a separate bathroom for every room. Purchasing an old home may mean that you may have to construct additional bathrooms to accommodate your needs.

• **Used homes may not have new features.**—If modular kitchens, high-tech security alarms and Internet wiring are very important to you, these may never be found in a used home. Technology is slowly coming into our homes and the newer the home, the newer the technology that is built into it.

Final Note. It may really be difficult to buy

a used home for one may have to look deeper into the hidden things in order to have an accurate evaluation. It may be prudent to ask for the help of a professional, whether it be an architect, engineer or a real estate appraiser who will give a technical assessment on the

property. Again, similar to buying a used car, one would feel a lot better if he or she brings along a mechanic before deciding.

(For comments and advice you may reach the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.)

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BSP acquired assets pact signed

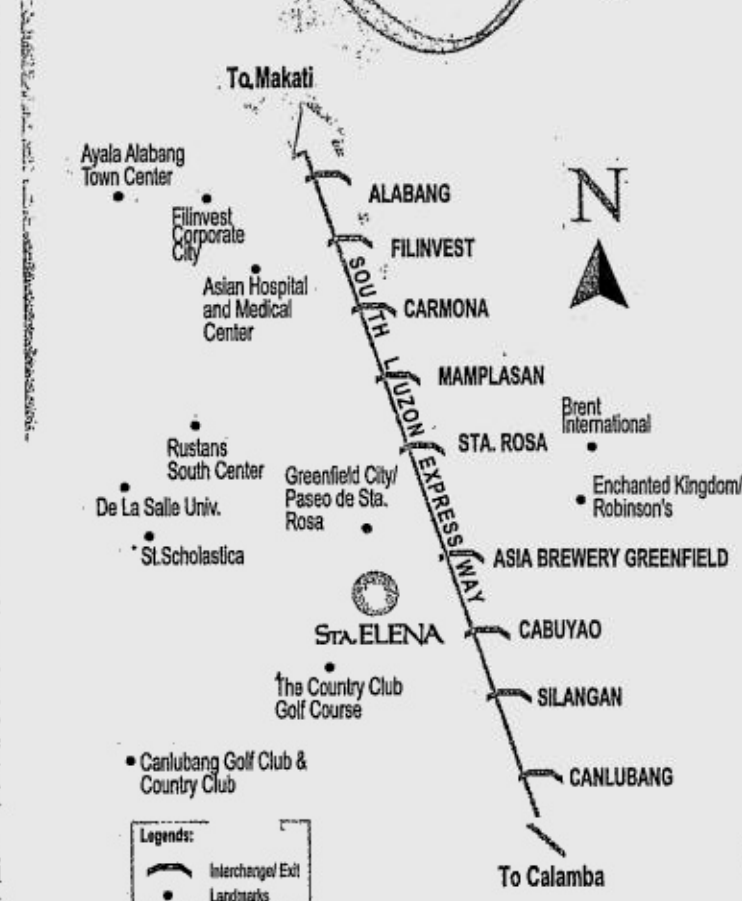
THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Realty Service Multipurpose Cooperative of the Realty Service Council of the Philippines (Rescop) have signed an agreement at the BSP Executive Business Center, Visayas Room, BSP Complex in Manila on the disposal of BSP-acquired assets.

The BSP was represented by lawyer Melpin A. Gonzaga, committee chair on disposal of real properties, and Asset Management Department director Rene N. Carreon while chair Luis Melchor V. Serquina, past president of the Philippine Association of Realtors Boards (Pareb), vice chair Federico E. Ruiz Jr., chair and past president of the Real Estate Brokers Association of the Philippines (Rebap), general manager Laura V. Garcia, Rebap QC president and founding chair Florentino S. Dulalia Jr., president of Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba), represented Realty Coop.

Others present were Realty Coop director and board secretary Choluta Ortega, member Nancy Tee, director Dr. Mary Gaw-So and audit committee chair Carolina Alvarez; BSP committee member Wilfredo Domo-ong, Realty Coop director and membership committee chair Aurora Punzalan, BSP Asset Management manager II Carlyn Pangilinan, Realty Coop founding chair Florentino Dulalia Jr., BSP Asset Management deputy director Geraldine Alag, Realty Coop vice chair (ret.) Gen. Federico Ruiz Jr., BSP committee member Luis Ferrer and BSP Asset Management consultant Ramon San Jose.

The disposal of BSP Acquired Assets was initially a project of Rescop, the advisory body to the Department of Trade and Industry on matters pertaining to real estate. Rescop also initiated the formation of the Realty Service Practitioner's Multipurpose Cooperative envisioned to handle the BSP Acquired Assets project and to provide assistance and support for the realty service practitioners.

Realty Coop, the first cooperative of its kind, is composed of licensed and experienced real estate brokers and consultants representing Rebap, Philippine Association of Realty Consultants and Specialists, Philippine Council of Real Estate Educators (Philcore), Pareb, National Real Estate Association and other national real estate associations. It was officially registered on Oct. 8, 2001 at the Cooperative Development Authority with a capitalization of P3.2 million.



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HCG export sales hit record high

By Charles E. Buban

HOCHENG Philippines Corp., manufacturer and distributor of top bathroom fixtures here and abroad, recently announced that it set a new record high for export sales in its first 10 months in 2003.

Export sales from January to October this year hit P300 million, a record if compared to the P50 million mark it posted for the same period last year.

"We attribute this surge to the international

market's high demand for our products, such as the Legend brand. Their confidence in us is a testament to the Filipino's creativity and excellent craftsmanship," announced HCG AVP for sales and marketing Sam Lu.

Exported to 20 countries

HCG products, manufactured in its 10-hectare plant at the First Cavite Industrial Estates in Dasmariñas, are being exported to 20 countries in Asia, Middle East and North America as well as to the United Kingdom.

Known abroad for its all-in-one concept, HCG products are sold to these countries in complete package, which would include a water closet, lavatory, faucet, tank fittings and other accessories to match them.

Whether it be floor and wall tiles or bathroom fixtures, HCG has a wide range of products designed to enhance the home environ-

ment.

HCG offers a wide selection of bathroom items from faucets to bath tubs from its popular lines like Jupiter, U2 series, Legato and Legend.

An innovator company

"By understanding the process of combining stylish ceramic design with practical consideration of home environment, HCG remains an innovator in both design and manufacturing technology," said Lu.

The company recently launched a promo called Win French Shower of Prizes, which has as grand prize a 7-day trip to Paris for two plus a pocket money worth \$1,000.

Winners will be drawn every month thereafter up to February 2004.

HCG has a two-story showroom on Chino Roces avenue in Makati City where customers can drop by to view all its product range.



NEW COFFEE DESTINATION

The Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf, a California-based specialty coffee and tea retailer, opened at the ground level of Eastwood City Walk 2. Set in time for the Christmas holidays, City Walk 2 features a four-level Miami-inspired complex.

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New condo community rising

AN ENTIRELY new condominium community will soon rise at the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, giving investors more choices for their business and residential requirements.

The development of West Parc comes in two phases. The first is a cluster of three 15-story buildings on about 4,000-square-meter land, while the second is composed of four more buildings on a 7,000-sq-m lot, virtually transforming the area into a community in itself.

Space flexible units

Each building in the Phase 1 development will have seven floors with bi-level units for studios and residential units with two or three bedrooms, which are all designed with space flexibility to suit a buyer's preference.

The ground floor of each building offers spaces for commercial use such as restaurants and coffee shops and facilities such as a gym and day-care center. Parking slots are also available at the ground and two basement levels.



WEST Parc architect's perspective.

Christopher Calibo, project team head for West Parc, said the congestion in most parts of Metro Manila gives house hunters and relocators more reason to turn to West Parc.

Accessibility

Developed by Filinvest Alabang Inc., West Parc, which is part of the West Gate Complex of Filinvest Corporate City, will be situated within walking distance from Alabang-Zapote Road, and a few meters away from major commercial establishments such as Festival Supermall and Westgate Center.

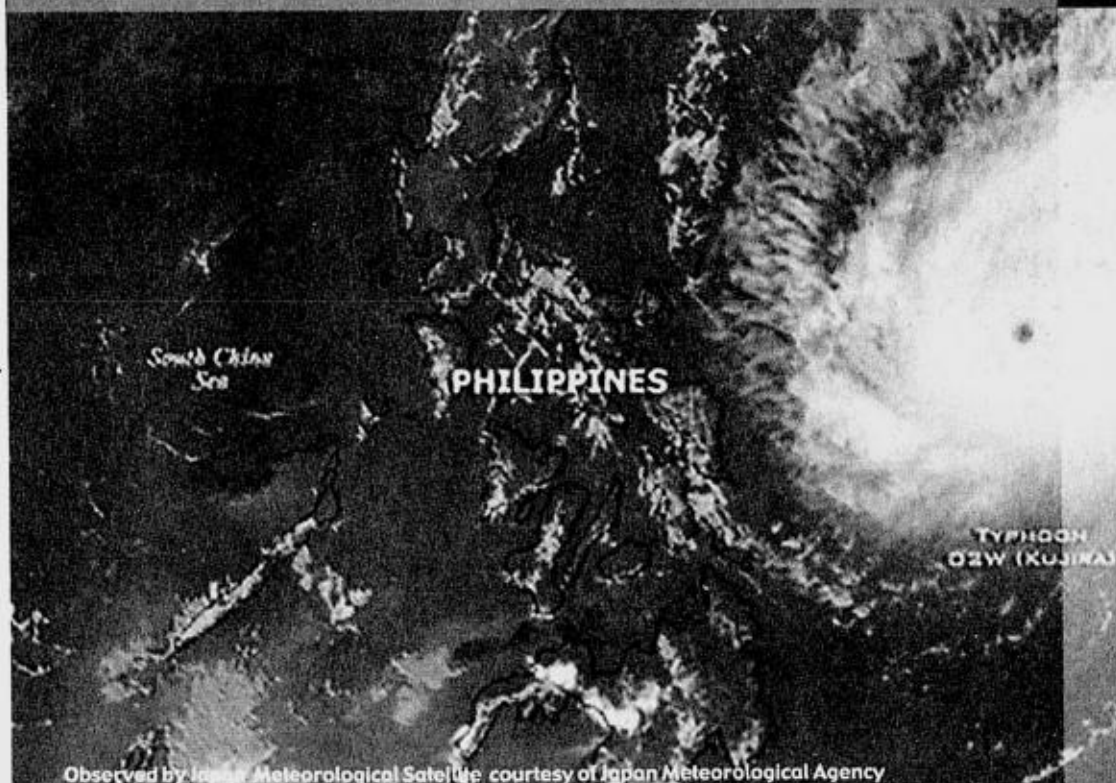
Calibo also cited the accessibility of West Parc, which is within a comfortable distance from major areas in Metro Manila such as Manila, Makati and Ortigas Center, as well as key provinces in Southern Luzon.

Investment-wise, owning a unit at West Parc gives buyers great opportunities to increase their money's worth as a result of the continuing developments within Filinvest Corporate City and Muntinlupa City in general.

Model units within the vicinity of the FAI Administration Building are open to visitors from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Mondays to Fridays.

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Observed by Japan Meteorological Satellite courtesy of Japan Meteorological Agency

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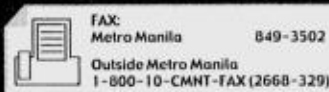
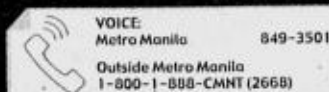
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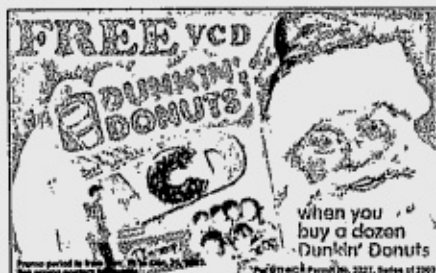
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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso



Diet study spawns new debate

TWO years ago, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) invited the top diet gurus to discuss their weight-loss programs in what was called "The Great Nutrition Debate." The late Dr. Robert Atkins was there and so was his main rival, Dr. Dean Ornish, as well as other diet authorities.

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan



was not required.

Measurements (weight, blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, and insulin) were taken at the beginning,

after two months, after six months, and at the end of one year.

Following a diet plan of any kind is not easy and early on there were dropouts. After two months, 22 percent dropped out of the study completely. After one year, the Ornish and Atkins dieters were down to half the original numbers. Not surprising since these two diets average a five percent dropout rate being the most extreme.

The Ornish diet is so low in fat and so high in fiber that people who have tried it say they feel like a rabbit or a cow. On the other hand, the Atkins plan is so high in protein and fat and so low in carbs that people quickly find it difficult to eat mostly meat, eggs and cheese. One woman who was on the Atkins for a few months told me that just looking at an omelet or meat dish made her lose her appetite.

The Zone and Weight Watchers did better in keeping research participants—they only lost 35 percent of their dieters. This could be because the two diet programs allow people to eat more or less equally from all food groups so there is less chance of boredom and craving for forbidden food. The high dropout rates of Ornish and Atkins indicate that a more moderate approach to weight loss may be best for long-term weight control.



What is more important for the heart—lowering 'bad' cholesterol or raising 'good' cholesterol? The jury is still out

First diet study

One of those studies was presented at the American Heart Association (AHA) annual convention last month. It was the first of its kind because it compared four diets: Atkins, Ornish, Zone and Weight Watchers. The Tufts University researchers led by Dr. Michael Dansinger felt this was a good representation of the different diets available today.

The researchers wanted to find out what effect the diets had on weight loss and heart disease so they chose participants between the ages of 22 and 72 who were not only overweight and obese (they weighed an average of 220 pounds) but who also had at least one risk factor for heart disease like high cholesterol, high blood pressure, high blood sugar levels or diabetes.

The study concluded that all four diets worked equally well with regard to weight loss and all of them improved heart health, at least in the short-term, but in different ways.

As I mentioned, the Atkins and Ornish were the most extreme of diets. The Zone and Weight Watchers are more moderate. The Zone advocates a 40-30-30 ratio of carbohydrates, fat, and protein, respectively, in every meal. It also emphasizes low-glycemic food or food that raises blood sugar levels slowly.

Weight Watchers is known for its weekly support group meetings and focus on total calorie control. Dieters are allowed to mix and match their food as long as they don't go over their total calorie limit.

Leveling playing field

To keep the comparison fair and unbiased, the people in the Weight Watchers group did not go to any support group meetings while dieters in the Ornish group did not do the full program, which heavily emphasized stress management techniques.

The researchers randomly assigned 160 men and women to the four diet plans. Participants were all given diet books and cookbooks for their particular diet program and received instructions for two months from a dietitian and doctor. Then, they were left on their own for the succeeding months. Exercise

Same rates of success

Participants who completed the study lost approximately the same amount of weight. The Ornish people lost six percent of their total body weight, the Weight Watchers and Zone groups five percent, and the Atkins dieters four percent. The researchers concluded that the composition of the diet didn't really matter as long as one had less total calories. It seems that any diet that makes you eat less than usual will make you lose weight.

Dansinger told AHA convention participants, "Rather than trying to match every patient and every individual with one plan, I would propose the best way is to match up an individual's food preference with the best strategy for them. The idea of one best diet for everyone is probably an old-fashioned notion."

Weight loss of six percent of total body weight after one year does not seem very exciting (the participants lost between 10 to 12 pounds), but what is encouraging is that the study showed that even modest weight loss can improve heart health. The researchers announced that risk of heart disease dropped seven percent for the Ornish group, 11 percent for Zone dieters, 12 percent for people on Atkins, and 15 percent for Weight Watchers.

In "The Great Nutrition Debate," Dr. Ornish lambasted the Atkins diet for raising cholesterol levels while Dr. Atkins countered that the Ornish plan increased the risk of diabetes by increasing insulin volumes. Both were proven wrong with this new study.

The Atkins diet lowered total cholesterol by about three per-

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Dec. 13 (Sat) Rustan's Makati 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm Rustan's Alabang 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm	Dec. 27 (Sat) Rustan's Makati 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm Rustan's Alabang 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm
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Ways to look better than ever

AT THE RATE technology in the cosmetic, beauty and wellness industries is advancing, a new face for anyone who desires one is literally a guarantee.

INSIDE OUT



Cory Quirino

In the search for newer and better ways to improve one's looks has also emerged a welcome development—the improvement in many people's self-confidence.

Here are some incredible new finds to boost your self-esteem and get you going during the holidays. After all, you deserve to give yourself a gift this Christmas.

Trimmer tummy

Patients scared of surgery may want to try the Lipo-Dissolve or phosphatidylcholine protein injection that melts fat layer by layer. The treatment uses a protein by-product of soy and lecithin originally used by doctors to treat arteriosclerosis (a disorder of the arteries).

The procedure developed by Brazilian Dr. Patucea Rittes has become widely popular in South America and Europe. It seems suitable for those with a small pouch of fat in the tummy that refuses to go away. Injections are given over a period of three to four months.

Side effects include a sensation of warmth in the injection area, slight swelling, and soreness or bruising which will go away in a week or so. Treatments are done in two-week intervals for a total of at least four sessions.

Any loose skin normally tightens gradually over time—even faster, with exercise. One can then enroll in a collagen induction therapy to tighten the skin (using creams and injections) or the skin master, which uses a machine to smoothen out the skin. (Belo Medical Center, tels. 8177178 and 8179283)

Younger-looking face

Try the Intense Pulse Light (IPL) treatment to remove years off your face.

A product of two laser companies (Coherent and Sharpland) that



ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

merged to form Lumeris, the IPL Quantum SR/HR machine uses two wavelengths of non-laser light—the SR to remove freckles, pigmentation, redness of face and small veins, and the HR to reduce hair and fine lines and to build up skin collagen, thus reducing wrinkles.

Six treatments are recommended, at two-week intervals between sessions. One session alone already results in visible improvements. The non-surgical, painless procedure lasts 20 minutes.

A cold protective gel is used to cool the face in preparation for the session. Eye covers shield the eyes from the light.

A slight dryness of the face may occur afterwards. Avoid any acid- or alcohol-based creams. Throughout the duration of the therapy, use sunblock to protect the skin from the sun's harmful rays. (Dr. Raul Guanzon, cosmetic surgeon, 7224972 and 6830448)

Perfect smile

It may be time to throw away your dentures. Dental implants may let you live a more normal life.

Missing teeth can now be replaced through oral surgery, a procedure that requires the use of titanium posts (like small screws) embedded in the gums.

Through osseointegration (the process by which certain materials may be introduced into living bone without triggering the body's adverse reaction to a foreign substance), the bone and implant will fuse over a period of about two months. A new crown is

then made and, within 20 minutes, your smile will look good as new.

This technology was pioneered by P.I. Branemark, a Swedish doctor, in the late '50s. It has since become a popular procedure in the United States.

Dental implants not only improve one's speech and ability to chew properly, they are also great confidence-boosters. (Dr. Mark Gan, 8439112)

Healthier hair

Aromatherapy Scalp Treatment (from my home spa recipe book)

1 tsp coco virgin oil/olive oil
½ tsp essential oil (rose or peppermint/lavender)

3 tsp commercially prepared hair crème rinse

Warm both coco and essential oils. Apply the warmed oils on the scalp and hair; then add the crème rinse. Massage lightly. Cover head with shower cap for 20 minutes. Shampoo thoroughly.

Better mood

Think colors before you start your day. Visualize yourself bathed in the hues of a rainbow to influence your day.

Red—passion
Pink—love
Green—abundance
Gold—courage
Blue—healing
White—protection

Your affirmation: "I am (mention your color) and everything is as it should be."

Love and light!

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Standing calf stretch with stability ball

THIS exercise stretches the calves or muscles at the back of the lower leg.

Equipment: Stability ball. As a substitute, place your hands against a wall or sturdy desk.

Exercise technique:

1. Hold the ball between your hands. Your feet should be hip width apart.

2. Place one foot behind you with the toes facing forward.

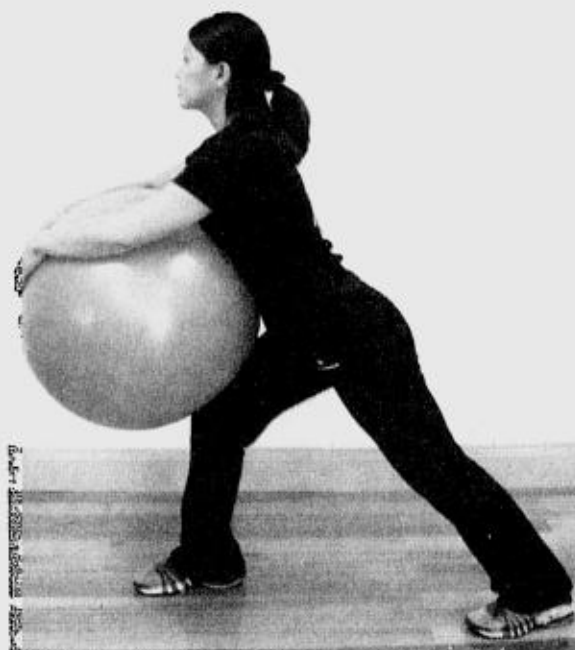
3. Bend the front knee and place the ball on top of your thighs. Lean into the ball to stretch the calf.

4. Hold the stretch for the desired length of time, then switch legs.

Performance tips:

1. Your feet should be hip width apart. Avoid putting the back foot directly behind the front foot because this will cause you to lose your balance.

2. Visualize lengthening or elongating your body in opposite directions. Lengthen through your heel and through the top of



your head.
3. Avoid holding your breath as you hold the stretch. Focus on breathing deeply and evenly.

Repetitions: Hold the stretch for 10-30 seconds.

Diet study spawns new debate

From page D1

cent, lowered LDL or "bad" cholesterol by eight percent, and raised HDL or "good" cholesterol by about 15 percent.

Initially, the Ornish diet raised insulin levels but after one year, they had dropped by 27 percent. Ironically, in spite of being a high carbohydrate diet, the Ornish plan lowered insulin rates better than the Atkins, which claimed a drastic cut in carbohydrate intake is the way to control insulin. The Ornish program won because it recommended unprocessed high-fiber carbohydrates, not refined carbs.

The Ornish plan also had the greatest effect on LDL cholesterol, reducing it to 16.7 percent of the total but the Weight Watchers program had the best effect on HDL cholesterol, raising it to 18.5 percent.

This comparative study does not end the debate on which diet is better for weight loss or heart health. In fact, it started a new debate at the AHA convention when scientists argued about what was more important for the heart—lowering "bad" cholesterol or raising "good" cholesterol?

This is just the first round in the diet showdown. Longer-term studies involving many more people are needed. But at least scientists are starting to test the theories of popular diet books to help clear up the confusion between conflicting diet claims.

For past articles and exercises, go to www.tinajuanfitness.info; for suggestions for future columns, e-mail me at fitness@attglob-al.net.

Stylish, ergonomically designed backpacks

JANSPORT backpacks have been a ubiquitous part of the American fashion landscape for more than 30 years. No standard American streetwear of cotton tees and faded blue jeans will be complete without a JanSport.

Part of its popularity may be attributed to its functional, utilitarian design. One could pack all daily essentials such as Discmans, laptops, books or vanity kits in the bag while still managing to look hip and cool.

The bag offers many eye-pleasing designs in rich, vibrant colors, and is thus able to complement any fashion get-up.

Another part of its appeal is the benefit it gives to one's form. Because JanSport backpacks are ergonomically designed, one need not worry about his or her posture getting disfigured because of the weight being carried.

JanSport bags are locally available through Uniglobe Travelware Co. Inc.



Chic and comfortable footwear

OUTLAND uses quality leather materials and develops shoe styles with emphasis on the ergonomics of the foot. Its insole padding provides extra comfort and its handwoven details give you individual style. The collection is available in brown, khaki, beige, wheat, camel, honey and black. Outland Footwear is available at the Airwalk Shop, basement of SM City North Edsa, SM Southmall, Molvina Complex in Antipolo, Depot at The Outlet Yard, Robinsons Place Iloilo, Bacolod, Dasmariñas, Sta Rosa and Lipa; SM City Cebu, Abanao Square Baguio and Gaisano Mall Davao.



Take Charge Doc!

Nicky S. Montoya, M.D.

Looking to learn more about your benefits under your MEDICard coverage? Do you want to be clear on the procedures, which allow you to avail of MEDICard's services? Get your information straight from MEDICard's Medical Director, DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA.

FAQs (frequently asked questions)

I saw the TV commercial about your new text service. What is it really and how can it help us members? Text MEDICard is real-time SMS (Short Message Service) that allows instant access to information on MEDICard's accredited network of medical providers. The service was developed to give members a fast and convenient means of getting information on its roster of accredited hospitals, doctors, and even their clinic schedules. It also affords members and even hospital staff, the convenience of "texting" in reporting to MEDICard member confinements. For more information, text "MEDICard" and send to 4627 (Smart & Talk N' Text) or 2344 (Globe & Touch Mobile).

Meet your MEDICard Team



Philippine Obstetric and Gynecology Society Fellow, Maria Lourdes Francisco joined MEDICard in 2000. Dr. Francisco finished her degree in Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas. She specializes in the field of Obstetrics and Gynecology and has had more than 10 years of clinical experience. Members may visit her for their needed consultations at the Medical City Cainta Clinic, G/F, Phase 3 of Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Marcos Highway cor. Felix Ave., Cainta, Rizal. Dr. Francisco holds clinic every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 2 to 6 in the evening.

Contract Signing



LBC EXPRESS, INC., the "HARI NG PADALA" signed its corporate healthcare agreement with MEDICard last December 03 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Present during the signing were (seated L-R) Luis Montoya (MEDICard EVP & GM), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (MEDICard Pres.), Marilou Olan (LBC Pres.) and Ma. Theresa Rañeses (LBC VP-Finance & Admin.). Standing (L-R) were the HMO's Miriam Villafuerte (Mktg. Services Mgr.), Pia Reyes (Corp. Accounts Mgr.), Marilyn Delgado (Account Mgr.) and LBC Exec. Sec., Nadette Manansala.

We encourage all MEDICard members to voice out their concerns and issues at hand. BE HEARD AND BE READ. You can write DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA at 9/F Sagittarius Bldg. H.V. De la Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com. For feedback on availability of our services, e-mail us at feedback@medicardphils.com.

For inquiries on individual or family membership, dial 818-2161. For group or corporate membership, dial 812-8360, 817-5136 or 817-4985 and look for a membership consultant. For Cebu Sales Office call (032) 253-5031; For Davao Sales Office call (082) 224-6931/305-3386.

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Ability to see future quite common

MY Nov. 4 column on predictions yielded several interesting reactions from three different countries.

From Vietnam came this letter from Nguyen Tram, a Miss Saigon, who shared her experiences of seeing the future.

"One time, I told my mom we would receive money from my brother in Germany. I stood at the gate and waited for the postman. He came and gave me a check from the bank."

That was not the first time it happened. Her dreams also came true most of the time. She could tell who the person on the other end of the line was when the phone rang. So many things have happened to her that she could not explain.

Predictions, or seeing the future, is more common than most people think. This ability is not confined to a few psychics only. Many ordinary individuals have experienced them.

Here's a letter from businesswoman Amor Puyat, who calls her husband "Nostradamus" because "he always predicts future events accurately!"

"Even before I actually met him," recalls Amor, "he said he would have something to do with me for the rest of my life. That was the first time he saw me at Chateau 1771 in El Pueblo almost six years ago. I wasn't even his type of girl, and he wasn't my type of guy. Then in less than 12 months after he made that statement, we were married in Tagaytay!"

Vision of a slaying

Another reader, PR practitioner Tess A., related a vision of a murder involving a high government official of a Western country and then seeing the picture of the woman victim on TV.

The incident happened two years ago. When Tess called me about it, I told her to write down her story and send it to newspaper editors of that country. Here is her fantastic story:

"It was midnight of Jan. 23, 2001. I was in bed still wide awake and desperately waiting for sleep to come. Then suddenly, I saw in my mind what I could only describe as a movie.

"I got the feeling that the setting was in a foreign country. It was a stream with shallow water running through it, there were big boulders all over... trees and plants. It was daytime. I saw a man and a woman. They were not close to each other, they were not talking.

"The woman was Caucasian with dark, curly, medium-length hair. She was wearing what I could describe as a dark red/maroon poncho. I couldn't see her lower body. The man was Caucasian, cropped light hair, not so tall, stocky, small mouth, almost chinky eyes, puffy face. He was wearing a light-col-

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco



ored jacket over a cotton shirt with light-colored pants. He had on light 'nubuck' work shoes.

"The woman then bent down in front of a big boulder to pick up something. Then it happened. I felt a blow to my head. It was a dull sensation. I felt no pain.

"I then realized that her head was bashed against the boulder with a hard object. I didn't see her anymore. The next thing I saw was the man looking around if there was any other person present.

"Seconds passed. I was still in bed with my eyes wide open. I didn't know what just happened. Then I started shaking uncontrollably. I then decided to call you.

"You helped calm me down, saying I was safe, it wasn't I who was in danger. You told me to write everything down. I did and then slowly forgot the incident.

Sensational case

"About four months later, in the early morning of May 17, I woke up at 2 a.m. and failed to go back to sleep again. I switched on the TV and surfed the cable news channels. By 4 a.m., I was tuned in to Fox News.

"At the tail end of one of the news items, I caught sight of the photo of a woman who at that time was reported missing in the US. I didn't even get her name, what the news was all about, etc.

"But it was the photo that got to me. It was the woman I saw four months ago!

"In the days that followed, I became so affected by everything. In the end, I decided I had to do something. I had to get in touch with anyone who could tell her family what I saw. I tried their website, e-mailed Fox News, even called the police overseas, and exchanged e-mail with a detective. The case be-

came a sensation. A US congressman was questioned. When he lost in the election held later, it was assumed that his connection with the case caused him his office.

"This case went on for sometime. And from what I know, several months later, they found her remains where I said she would be.

"I assumed no one believed me. Why would they? Most people just laugh at these things and think that you are weird. I only told you and later on some close friends."

Finally, I received a letter from Carla Van der Spuy, a journalist from South Africa, who was writing an article about predictions when she came across my column on the Internet.

She wrote: "I would like to obtain permission from you to quote from the article regarding your experiences."

Address letters to this column to 308 Prince Plaza 1, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 or e-mail jlicauco@edsamail.com.ph. Visit my website at <http://jlicauco.tripod.com>. Listen to my DZMM radio program every Sunday, 6-8 p.m.

This gift is not confined to a few psychics only; many ordinary individuals have experienced it

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Hotel brings back therapeutic program

MANDARIN Oriental's Pure Yoga studio is re-staging a therapeutic program designed to relieve back pain, until Dec. 29 at the Pure Yoga studio, under the direction of Prakash Singh Bisht from Rishikesh, India.

Apart from offering relief to those who are already suffering from severe or chronic back pain, this program is recommended for people who have may be over-indulging themselves during the holidays.

Priced at P2,000, the course consists of 6 one-hour sessions spread out over a two-week period. The first batch is up to Dec. 13, while the second batch runs from Dec. 15 to 29.

Enrollees may choose from either a morning class, from 9-10 a.m., or an evening class from 8-9 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, or alternatively, every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, same time slots.

Each session will accept a minimum of three students and a maximum of 12. Mandarin Oriental's Pure Yoga studio is on the 18th floor. Pre-enrollment and admission is on a first-come first-served basis. Call 7508888 local 2105.

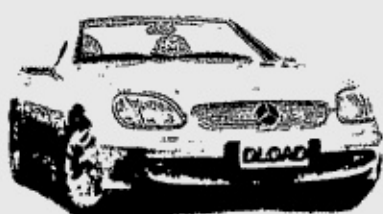


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Nike opens its first-ever Southeast Asian flagship store for active, health-conscious women



COLO Ventosa, Nike Philippines marketing manager



WOMEN power writ large

Fountain of beauty and strength

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Romy Homillada

THE GREEK goddess of victory pledges its allegiance to women in the 21st century as Nike opens its first-ever Southeast Asian flagship store, Nike Women, on the 2/F of the swanky Greenbelt 4, Ayala Center, Makati City.

Finally, a sports house tailored exclusively for women and their many whims—tough women, that is.

Nike Women is part of Nike's commitment to women empowerment through fitness fashion, style and no-nonsense state-of-the-art technology.

Any woman exposed to the fitness world for some time would no doubt have noticed that only a small nook is appropriated for ladies' workout gear in a roomful of men's sports apparel. Many are forced, then, to spend time hopping from one shop to the other to get what they want or, sometimes, what-
ever is close enough.

With Nike Women, they now have an entire store of fitness and active gear to themselves.

There was a time when Nike was more known for adding flair to otherwise boring workout sweats. Appearances were all too important then. But today, all grown up and mature, it instills the idea that, more than looks, a tough mind and a strong body are what make a beautiful woman.

Nike is revolutionizing the concept of beauty and femininity by sculpting and toning those "womanly" curves, by placing six-pack to the smooth abs, by simply saying: "It's not beauty lotion, it's sweat." This is the Nike woman, and that woman, says Nike Phils, marketing manager Colo Ventosa, is beautiful.

"Nike is celebrating womanhood, that women today can do anything they set their mind into, that there is beauty in strength," he says.

The store's new line of shoes, for instance, bears mantras such as "exceed expectations" and "attempt the impossible," among others. So every time a woman works out or takes a leisurely stroll wearing her favorite shoes, the empowering mantra hopefully works its way into her system.

Big chunk

Ventosa says there has never been a better time than today to open a Nike shop exclusive to women. Studies, after all, have long revealed that more women enroll in gyms than men.

"Women comprise a big chunk of the market," he says.

FOUNTAIN/E4

9 Dec

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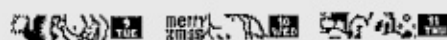


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BEST FOOT FORWARD. Jo-Anne Salgado with vivacious Nini Layug and stylish Marietta Guanzon



HOSTESSES Nene Leonor and Chit Salud



YOLLY Ayson with Lilibeth Fernandez Campos and Marissa Fenton



MAYENNE Carmona, Jojo Zabarte, Frannie Jacinto and Gilda Salonga. At the back, with celebrator G with three of the hostesses for the birthday party—Fortune Ledesma, Nini Layug and Natty Pappas.

A birthday bash for Mr. Popular, a party for star



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YOU can be sure Cosmo Manille's high-velocity socialites will come marching in whenever there's a fashionable event in town.

True enough, *palanggas*, they all came in fashionable force that sunny afternoon to congregate in the watering hole of the very rich—the Fairways of The Manila Golf Club.

The tres special event was the 72nd birthday of Gilbert R. Perez, and he was there with his close pals.

Ten women of substance and style hosted the afternoon tea for Gilbert, namely consul to Guatemala Mellie Ablaza; Consul to Togo Evie Costa; Consul to Monaco Fortune Ledesma; Consul to Belize Helen Ong; and society darlings Letty Syquia, Nene Leonor, Chit Salud, May Neri, Natty Pappas and Nini Layug.

The fun get-together lasted almost up to dinner time. After all, tons of juicy gossip were being passed around—as well as lots of fashion talk, diets, and assorted body-beautiful dreams, dahlings.

"Try the Atkins way," one socialite advocated. "Yes, I've tried it, but I gained a lot when I stopped," said another. "Well, I stick to my Fit for Life diet," chimed in world beauty Mayenne Carmona.

One witty businessman commented, "When my wife started going on a diet and started to lose weight, she immediately put me and the children on a diet too, would you believe?"

Working socialite-with-a-super-figure Agnes Huibonhoa has her own formula. "Try eating before 6 p.m., and drop fruits and dessert after dinner," she said.

But hey, one socialite had the best recipe for losing weight, *palanggas*. She said, "It's easy to stick to a diet these days. The way prices of fish, meat, chicken and vegetables are going sky-high, just eat the staple diet of the less fortunate."

Right on, gal!

Pedigreed pooches

Every dog has its day, dahlings, and I tell you, these dogs not only had their day, but their 15 minutes of fame.

I'm talking of that day when Manille's most pedigreed pooches arrived en masse at Rockwell's Power Plant Mall for the grand opening of Rustan's "Celebrity Pooch Gallery," which was presented by Rustan's Supermarkets and Metro magazine in cooperation with Pedigree, the fofie gras for gourmand dogs.

The featured doggies came in full bow-wow force, some not only with their owners, but also with their househelp!

And why not? After all, dahlings, man's best friend got a lot of pampering that day, with Pedi-

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice
Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen on Kodak Max



gree-sponsored doggie cocktails and, yes, their very own grooming salon attending to their needs.

Traffic-stopping vivacious personality Tessa Prieto Valdes hosted this mad-dog show, and she was perfectly dressed in a frock straight out of 101 Dalmatians.

Now for some dog stories, *palanggas*.

Ginggay Joven and her hubby Noel dela Merced lavishes attention on their Doffie and a Jack Russell called Frannie.

Former Gov. Emily Relucio Lopez cried like a baby when her daughter Celine's mascot, the itty-bitsy chihuahua she called Hercules, died of a heart attack at the age of one, in front of her during breakfast. Now Emily has a reincarnated replica of Hercules called, well, Bruno.

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Moi asked Paris-educated sugar baron Edouard Garcia: "Why do they call a dog man's best friend?" He answered, "Because dog never gives you advice, never tries to borrow money from you, and have no in-laws." Yes!



PRETTY Jenny Serrano with mega car racer Jojo Silverio and fresh-faced Kimmy Johnson



PHOTOGRAPHER Wig Tysmans with writer Alya Honasan, Lyka the yellow labrador and Bobot Meru



HANDSOME Vince Hizon and attractive Shaan Bermudez with their best friend Jawo



RUSTAN'S PR maven Ginggay Joven and husband Noel dela Merced with Frannie



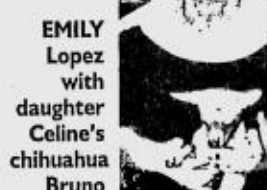
RUSTAN'S top lady Nedy Tantoco with her fave chichi Yorkshire terriers, accompanied by the househelp



EDUARDO Lopez, Rustan's Coffee Corp. (Starbucks Phils.) president and general manager; Soren Bech, general manager, Master Food Phils; Menchu Lopez, Rustan's Supermarket EVP and general manager; Tessa Prieto-Valdes; Jeena Lopez; Nedy T.; and Ishi Bashi, Master Foods Phil. marketing director



ANNA Angara with her poochie Dusty



EMILY Lopez with daughter Celine's chihuahua Bruno



BEST FOOT FORWARD. Jo-Anne Salgado with vivacious Nini Layug and stylish Marietta Guanzon



HOSTESSES Nene Leonor and Chit Salud



YOLLY Ayson with Lilibeth Fernandez Campos and Marissa Fenton



MAYENNE Carmona, Jojo Zabarte, Frannie Jacinto and Gilda Salonga. At the back, with celebrator G with three of the hostesses for the birthday party—Fortune Ledesma, Nini Layug and Nati Pappas.

A birthday bash for Mr. Popular, a party for stars



CRISelda Lontok



OLGA Severino Martel



CHING Cruz



CARMINA Pavia



NINI Licaros



MAY Neri



HANDSOME Vince Hizon and attractive Shaan Bermudez with their best friend Jawo



RUSTAN'S PR maven Ginggay Joven and husband Noel dela Merced with Frannie

YOU can be sure Cosmo Manila's high-velocity socialites will come marching in whenever there's a fashionable event in town.

True enough, *palanggas*, they all came in fashionable force that sunny afternoon to congregate in the watering hole of the very rich—the Fairways of The Manila Golf Club.

The tres special event was the 72nd birthday of Gilbert R. Perez, and he was there with his close pals.

Ten women of substance and style hosted the afternoon tea for Gilbert, namely consul to Guatemala Mellie Ablaza; Consul to Togo Evie Costa; Consul to Monaco Fortune Ledesma; Consul to Belize Helen Ong; and society darlings Letty Syquia, Nene Leonor, Chit Salud, May Neri, Nati Pappas and Nini Layug.

The fun get-together lasted almost up to dinner time. After all, tons of juicy gossip were being passed around—as well as lots of fashion talk, diets, and assorted body-beautiful dreams, dahlings.

"Try the Atkins way," one socialite advocated. "Yes, I've tried it, but I gained a lot when I stopped," said another. "Well, I stick to my Fit for Life diet," chimed in world beauty Mayenne Carmona.

One witty businessman commented, "When my wife started going on a diet and started to lose weight, she immediately put me and the children on a diet too, would you believe?"

Working socialite-with-a-super-figure Agnes Huibonhoa has her own formula. "Try eating before 6 p.m., and drop fruits and dessert after dinner," she said.

But hey, one socialite had the best recipe for losing weight, *palanggas*. She said, "It's easy to stick to a diet these days. The way prices of fish, meat, chicken and vegetables are going sky-high, just eat the staple diet of the less fortunate."

Right on, gall

Pedigreed pooches

Every dog has its day, dahlings, and I tell you, these dogs not only had their day, but their 15 minutes of fame.

I'm talking of that day when Manila's most pedigreed pooches arrived en masse at Rockwell's Power Plant Mall for the grand opening of Rustan's "Celebrity Pooch Gallery," which was presented by Rustan's Supermarkets and Metro magazine in cooperation with Pedigree, the fole gras for gourmand dogs.

The featured doggies came in full bow-wow force, some not only with their owners, but also with their househelp!

And why not? After all, dahlings, man's best friend got a lot of pampering that day, with Pedi-

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen on Kodak Max



gree-sponsored doggie cocktails and, yes, their very own grooming salon attending to their needs.

Traffic-stopping vivacious personality Tessa Prieto Valdes hosted this mad-dog show, and she was perfectly dressed in a frock straight out of 101 Dalmatians.

Now for some dog stories, *palanggas*.

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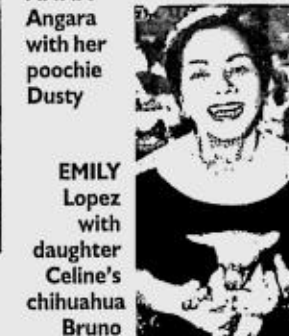
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ilbert Perez (extreme right), are Monette Guevarra

r pooches

Party swirl

It was one of those weekends that had five to six happenings going on all at once, and mostly in Greenbelt 2 and 3, *palanggas*.

So for a change, *moi* started off at one of my favorite spots in Rockwell, at the pulsating Dish, which was elbow-to-elbow full with executives, the moneyed, the social faces and the fun pack all out for a swinging night. Rocking the place were Jay-R and South Border.

Caught up with a friend there, and we dashed off to the ground floor to Beaver Lopez's new pride and joy, Teak, the latest hot, hot, bar and resto to open at Rockwell.

It looked like the whole ABS-CBN was there to enjoy the place's ambience: Freddie Garcia, always with a ready smile; elegant top lady Charo Santos-Concio; *muy simpatico* Mark Lopez; Monchet Olives, always a pleasure to bump into; and our *palangga*, Jackie Ejercito Lopez, who was looking really pretty.

"I still have to get rid of five pounds," she laughingly told me.

We then dashed across the street, to one of the Luna condos, where the fiancée of Leica Carpo's youngest sister Margaret, good-looking Spaniard Bilbao Javier Salazar, was being given a farewell bash. He was going home for a while before jetting back to Manila to marry the woman of his dreams, dahlings.

Dudu Vaca was there with his pal, international businessman Jacques Dupasquier; Anton Barretto and his angel Leah Puyat of Pineapple were also there, telling us how it took them two hours and a half to get to Bahay Pangarap Hall in Malacañang Park for the launching of Mons Tantoco's already popular book, "Baro!"

"I memorized every billboard from Paco to Malacañang," said an exhausted Leah.

Young businessman Andy Jacinto was the perfect host, attending to as many of the invitees as he could personally handle, since his wife, super head-turner Kitty, came out a bit later, after getting herself all prettied up. She came with EOréal gal Leica C. and her "We are just friends now" date, Juan Miguel Ongsiako of Paul Smith.

Moi caught up with tall and beautiful Nanette Prieto De Leon before she took a French exit. "I have to get up real early tomorrow, so I better split now," she said, as *moi* walked her to the door.

Nay Nay Ventura; El Circulo's hotshot Malou Gamboa; beautiful couple Mandy and Duane Santos; and young gent Ralby Tambunting were seen partying till dawn.

From there, we hopped over to Restaurant 12 at Greenbelt 2, where everyone was rocking to the sounds of banker, Arrakis business partner and DJ for the night Raul Manzano, who was lording it over his gang of super fun people such as Toffer Vidal, Robbie Francisco and Paulo del Rosario.

From there, the whole group moved over to Nuvo, where Philippine Tatler's Anton San Diego was with his close pal and former schoolmate Pops Fernandez, (who looked divine!) and PR prince Keren Pascual. They were having endless rounds of Cosmopolitan, and were later on joined by supermodels Paolo Paraiso and Luke Jickain.

Breezing in a bit later was Mr. Starmaker himself, Joji Dingcong, who was all set to take off for Dubai to look after a Martin Nievera concert.

"I'll be gone for a couple of days, and will again leave for Dubai, but this time with Vina Morales," he said.

Next table had dusky beauty Andrea Bautista, who turned out to be so articulate. Her boyfriend, movie and TV star Diether Ocampo, was in a gig with his band, Blow, but rushed over and joined the group later.

Also there were Tim Yap, Doris Magsaysay Ho, and Celine Lopez with her platoon of friends, showing around Paris-based stunner Melissa Lopez, who is in town for the holidays.



MELLIE Ablaza



LETTY Syquia, Baby Arenas and Agnes Huibonhoa

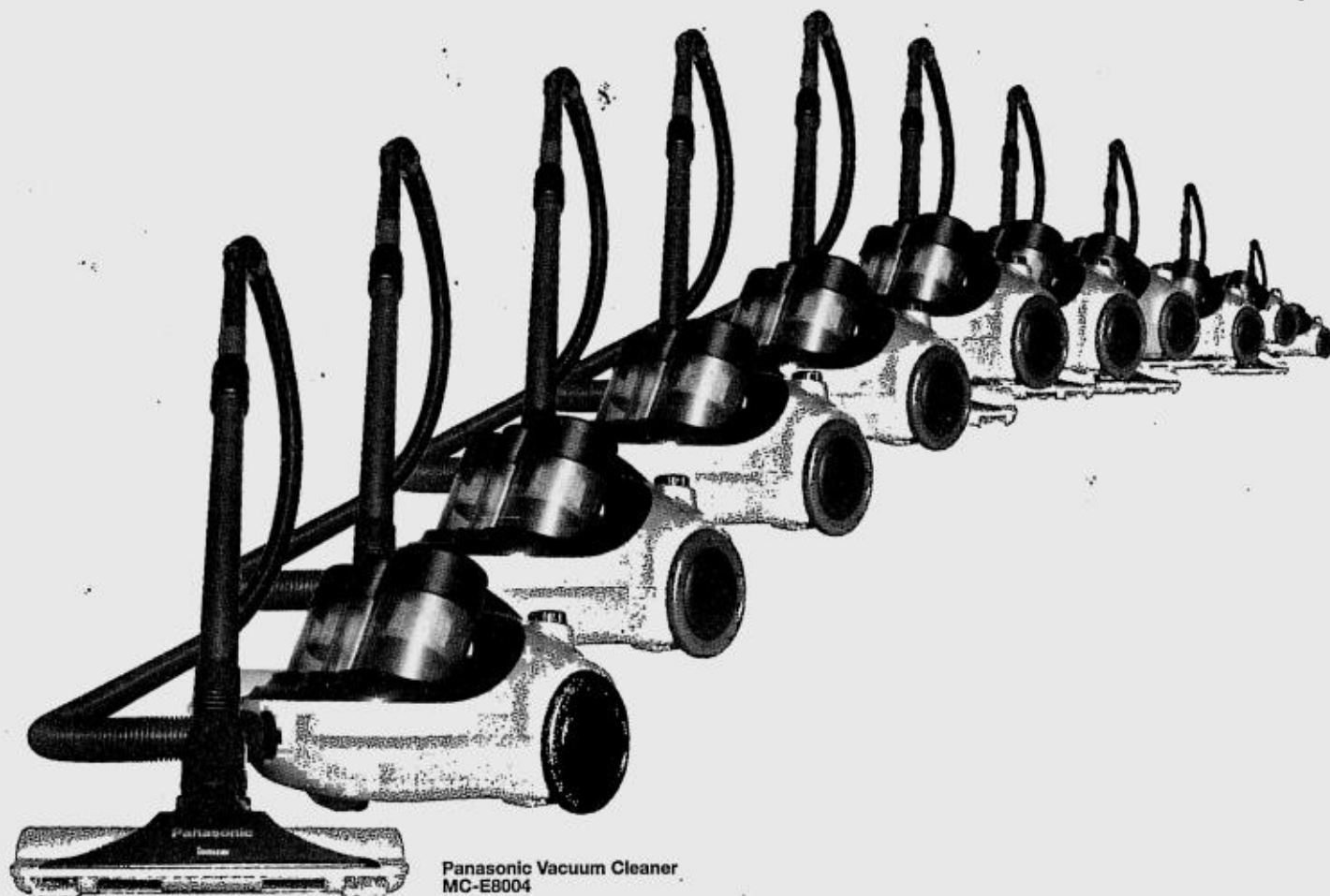


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ideas for life

Fountain of beauty and strength

From page E1



SHOES for active modern women...

ket. Women are so much into fitness right now. Exercising is part of their health regimen. Since Nike Women caters exclusively to women, it is expected to do good," she says.

Nike Women's merchandise are both functional and stylish, and, more importantly, are designed with the latest health-beneficial technology available—say, thermal or cooling effect for fitness gear.

The sales personnel also were trained by Nike's Ekin specialist to ensure that they help customers of whatever shade, whether finicky or stylish or sporty or clueless, make the best shopping choices.

Floor mats, free weights, Dri-Fit and Sphere apparel, socks, water bottles, gym bags, caps, even shoes and slippers are all here—and all for her, of course.

From footwear to apparel to equipment, this is a woman's store down to its design, color, layout and overall appeal.

Ventosa also encourages women to check out the Nike website (www.nikebeautiful.com), which has loads of information not limited to Nike women gear and apparel.

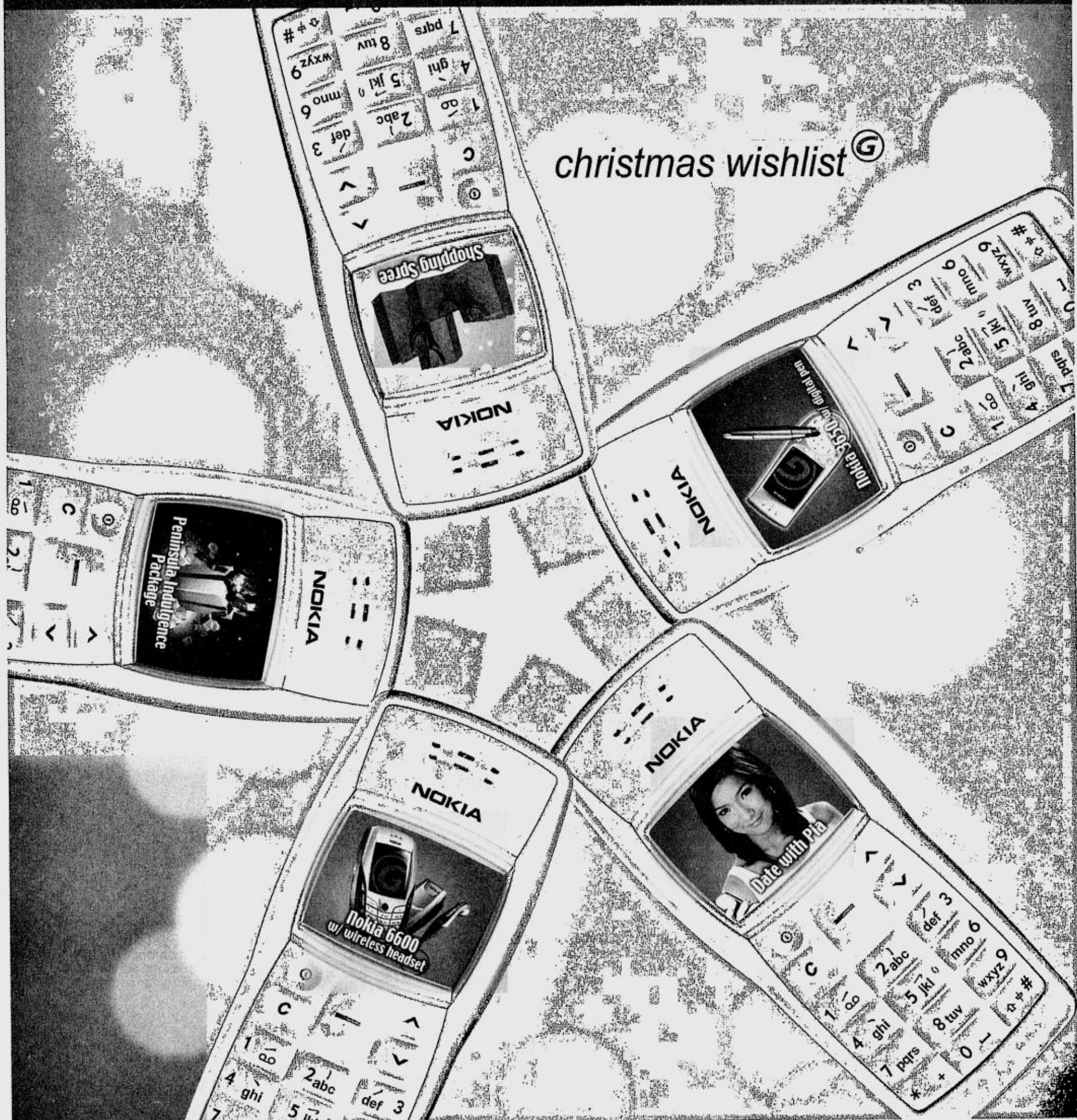
There are exercise performance tips, updates on the hottest and latest fitness trends, an interactive feature that allows visitors to create their own mantra, and downloadable Nike-beautiful screen savers to inspire them throughout the day.

A Nike Women branch is also located at the 3/L Robinsons Galleria Expansion Mall, Ortigas Center.

E-mail the author at ajamora@inquirer.com.ph



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* text FANZONE to 2978 to get to know Pia Guanilo better

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- Nokia 6600 phone unit + wireless clip-on headset

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See posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5135, Series of 2003.

LIFESTYLE



Bangkok is chock-full of spas that offer the ultimate experience in rest and rejuvenation



ANANTARA resort and spa

Corners of care and comfort

By Alex Y. Vergara

ARE your back and feet killing you after shopping all day in one of Bangkok's many mega malls and night markets?

If even those cheap, one-of-a-kind finds fail to lift your spirits and relieve the aches and pains caused by yesterday's buying binge, then it's probably time to pay the nearest spa a visit.

While we in Metro Manila are just beginning to discover and savor the spa experience, both locals and tourists in Bangkok have been trooping regularly to spas for nearly a decade now.

This accounts for the popularity of Mandara Spa, one of several high-end city spas in the Thai capital.

"People need a place to relax without having to go far," said Monica Orias, PR and sales manager of Mandara Spa Thailand. "This accounts for the growing popularity of city spas. The practice is no longer a fad, since a growing body of medical and scientific research attests to the power of touch to heal people."

Bali-based Mandara Spa Asia is in charge of regional operations, but the main corporate office is in Hawaii.

The first Mandara Spa in Thailand opened at the Bangkok Marriott Resort in 1999. There are now 11 Mandara Spas all over the country, including one at the Royal Orchid Sheraton Hotel also in Bangkok.

Mandara properties, including the ones in Indonesia, Malaysia, China and Japan, have one thing in common: all are based or affiliated with a five-star hotel or resort.

"We're certainly not the first city spa to open in Bangkok," said Orias, a Filipina who's now married to a Thai. "There are quite a number which offer similar services. We try to make a difference in the way we deliver our treatments."

The difference, she adds, is in the details. It doesn't matter whether a guest goes for a traditional Thai or Mandara massage (an exclusive to Mandara Spa, with two therapists doing a combination of several types of massages—Balinese, Swedish, Japanese, Hawaiian, name it). He

CORNERS/F3



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FRM DEC 1 TIL DEC 31 U CAN TXT AND TXT AND TXT

Mothers learn from program for kids

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

A FEEDING program for undernourished children is helping parents develop healthier eating habits as well.

The program, undertaken jointly by Mead Johnson Philippines, the nutritional arm of the American Bristol-Myers Squibb Company; the non-government organization Kabisig ng Kalahi and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), was initiated to help put back on the nutritional track pre-school-aged children who were way too small and underweight for their ages.

DSWD identifies the areas where help is most needed and Kabisig ng Kalahi organizes the communities and supervises the activities to be undertaken. Mead Johnson, through its *Masustansyang Gatas Alay ng Mead Johnson para sa Batang Pilipino*, provides the main component of the nutrition program, milk, the most complete food available and the quickest and easiest way to keep the target children back on the right health path.

Although most Filipinos suffer from lactose intolerance, or the inability to process milk resulting in stomach upsets and other related problems, children aged one to six are not that far away yet from the time when they were wholly dependent on mother's milk or its substitutes. This allows them to drink milk with little or no discomfort.

The partners work in a community or barangay for six months providing not just milk but one hot meal a day based on a prescribed nutritional menu. The feeding program is complemented by other services like medical checkup and deworming. Every month, child beneficiaries are weighed to determine their progress.

Launched in July 2002, the feeding program has reached a total of 1,575 malnourished children after one year. More than half of the communities reached in the National Capital Region, Regions II, IV, V, VI and Central Mindanao have registered significant improvement in the weight of child beneficiaries.

Broader impact

The number of those covered by the program may seem modest but it has not only helped chil-



VICKY Wieneke, Kabisig ng Kalahi president, talks to members of the Mothers Association in Parañaque's San Antonio Village, including its president and the only man in the group, Raul Elizalde.

dren attain the target nutritional status but its impact has actually extended beyond the targeted kids.

An important component of the tripartite initiative is education and information for parents, specifically mothers whose contribution to the initiative is to help prepare the food for the daily feedings. The mothers do not just cook the food in the menus drawn up by nutritionists and designed to provide the most health benefits at the least cost possible. The women also get lessons in proper nutrition as well as responsible parenthood, sanitation and hygiene and related topics.

In Barangay 143, Zone 5 in Pasay City, an area bounded on two sides by an estero and Edsa, women have learned that they can prepare a nutritious meal for 30 children at a cost ranging from P100 to P298—less than P4 to about P10 per child—way below the cost of a burger or a bottle of soda. Of course, the price covers only the hot meal and does not include the milk (one glass per day for each of the children) provided by Mead Johnson. The simple but nutritious and cheap dishes include Egg Sarciado with Sayote, Adobong Kangkong with Tokwa, and Ginataang Papaya with Dilis and Malunggay.

The nutritional lesson is not lost on many of the mothers participating in the program. Helen Amoc, 26, whose son Royson is one of the more impressive success stories of the program (his body was almost deformed from weak bones due to undernutrition), said, "Hindi lang mga bata ang natutong kumain ng tama, pati mga nanay." She learned, for instance, that "nakakatipid sa gulay" and found that the simple menus were actually highly nutritious.



ALBERTO Ong, chair of Barangay 143, Zone 5, actively supports the feeding program.

Unlearning wrong lessons

Participating in the program also rid the mother of three of some misconceptions, many of them heard from neighbors and other people. "Maraming sabi-sabi na hindi naman totoo—na ang gatas ay makakasama, 'pag-binigyan ng gulay ang bata hindi matutunawan." Amoc said getting the rest of the family, particularly her husband, to eat more vegetables was not difficult. Her husband, she said, found meat difficult to digest.

Elsa Paraday, also 26, and who has a degree in Education, said she initially found eating vegetables difficult, "parang di malunok ang gulay," and she had



MOTHERS and children await the distribution of milk from Mead Johnson at the barangay hall of Barangay 143, Zone 5.

not eaten tokwa before she participated in the program ("may vitamin pala yon dahil galing sa soya"). But now she has learned to cook and she no longer uses vetsin or MSG, although the latter is a sore point with her husband who works in a Chinese restaurant and likes his food with the flavor enhancer.

The two women and other mothers, who have been reached by the program, have been equipped with simple knowledge that will help ensure that their other children do not suffer from malnutrition as well.

Vicky Wieneke, Kabisig president, said when they started the program, many mothers were unwilling to participate citing household work. But now, those who could not attend the sessions themselves, would send their children needing help with mothers who were active participants. "There are even instances when, because the wife is working, the

men would bring the kids."

This is certainly true in their new project site in Parañaque's San Antonio Village covering the sections known as Creeks I and II. In fact, the president of the partner Mothers' Association in the new site is a man, Raul Elizalde, a tricycle driver. His wife, who works as a daily household help, does not have the time to bring their child to the feeding center so Elizalde has assumed the responsibility saying, matter of factly, "May time ako para magdala ng bata." The father of four isn't one to worry about what people would say about his joining—even heading—a women's group.

E-mail the author at lbolido@hotmail.com.ph

FROM being a severely malnourished kid who could barely move his arms, Royson Amoc is now a typical healthy 5-year-old.



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MILK provided by Mead Johnson is an important component of the feeding program, bringing undernourished kids quickly and easily on the right health path.

AND TXT AND TXT AND TXT AND TXT AND TXT AND

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ALBERTO Ong, chair of Barangay 143, Zone 5, actively supports the feeding program.

Unlearning wrong lessons

Participating in the program also rid the mother of three of some misconceptions, many of them heard from neighbors and other people. "Maraming sabi-sabi na hindi naman totoo—na ang gatas ay makakasama, 'pagbinigyan ng gulay ang bata hindi matutunawan." Amoc said getting the rest of the family, particularly her husband, to eat more vegetables was not difficult. Her husband, she said, found meat difficult to digest.

Elsa Parayday, also 26, and who has a degree in Education, said she initially found eating vegetables difficult, "parang di malunok ang gulay," and she had



MOTHERS and children await the distribution of milk from Mead Johnson at the barangay hall of Barangay 143, Zone 5.

not eaten *tokwa* before she participated in the program ("may vitamin pala yon dahil galing sa soya"). But now she has learned to cook and she no longer uses *vetsin* or MSG, although the latter is a sore point with her husband who works in a Chinese restaurant and likes his food with the flavor enhancer.

The two women and other mothers, who have been reached by the program, have been equipped with simple knowledge that will help ensure that their other children do not suffer from malnutrition as well.

Vicky Wieneke, Kabisig president, said when they started the program, many mothers were unwilling to participate citing household work. But now, those who could not attend the sessions themselves, would send their children needing help with mothers who were active participants. "There are even instances when, because the wife is working, the

men would bring the kids."

This is certainly true in their new project site in Parañaque's San Antonio Village covering the sections known as Creeks I and II. In fact, the president of the partner Mothers' Association in the new site is a man, Raul Elizalde, a tricycle driver. His wife, who works as a daily household help, does not have the time to bring their child to the feeding center so Elizalde has assumed the responsibility saying, matter of factly, "May time ako para magdala ng bata." The father of four isn't one to worry about what people would say about his joining—even heading—a women's group.

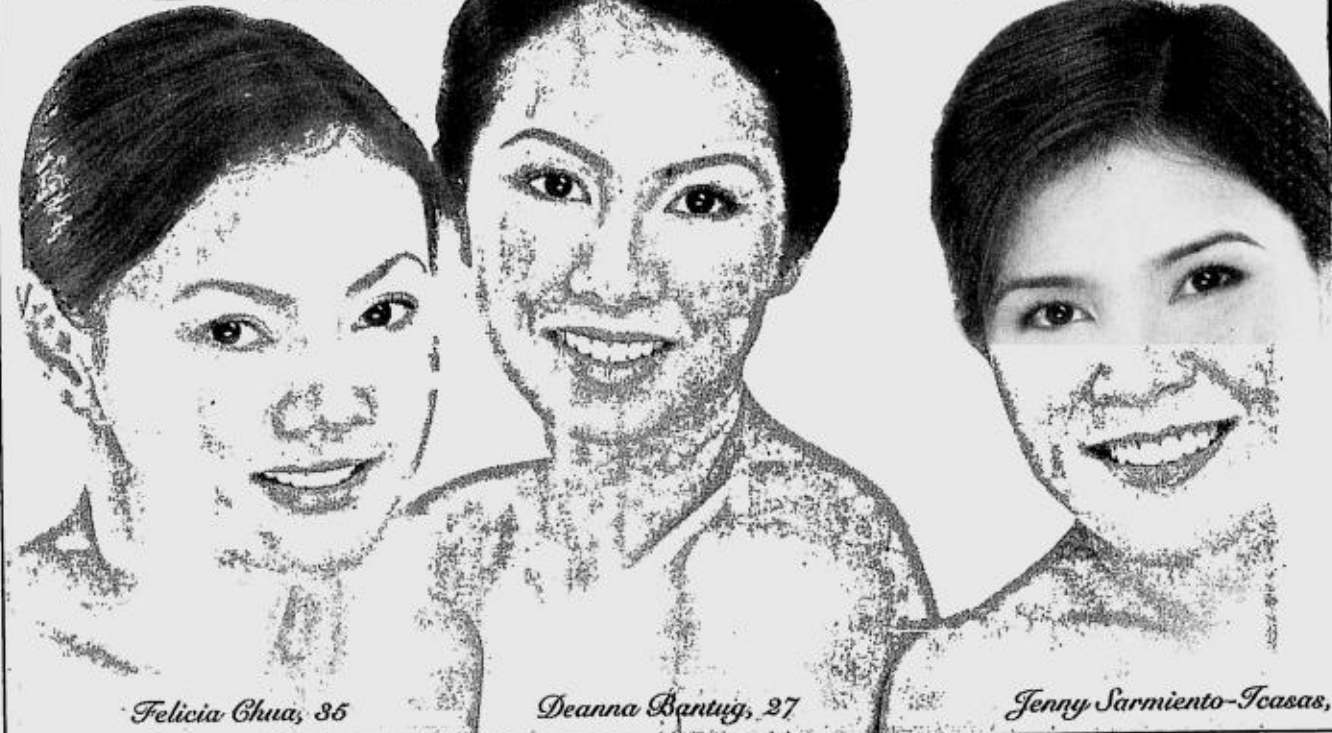
E-mail the author at lbolido@hotmail.com.ph

FROM being a severely malnourished kid who could barely move his arms, Royson Amoc is now a typical healthy 5-year-old.



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From page F1

or she is pampered with extras such as fresh orchids, unlimited servings of lemon grass tea and a floral foot wash before each session.

Each treatment room comes with a safe, dresser and steam room that doubles as a shower area. Mandara Spa offers the works, from massages to facials, body scrubs to seaweed baths, haircuts to scalp massages, manicures to pedicures. Services run from as short as 30 minutes to as long as the half-day spa "experience."

Tropical flavor

During a recent trip to Thailand sponsored by Thai Airways International and the Tourism Authority of Thailand, we got to experience for ourselves the kind of service a typical city spa such as Mandara at Bangkok Marriott has to offer. Each of us was assigned a specific treatment.

Like the entire spa, which is set in a lush garden, the air-conditioned treatment room has a decidedly tropical flavor, with carved double doors, jade-colored floor tiles and sparse furniture pieces.

We were made to try the traditional Thai massage, a blend of deep-tissue massage using pressure points and stretching techniques sans oil or lotion. A sprightly female attendant with a gentle voice but a powerful pair of hands took all of 90 minutes to perform the procedure.

"Our female staff are well trained to do the entire range of treatments," said Orias. "They can also understand and speak basic English."

Not a few women will fall for Mandara Spa's aromatherapy as well as whitening facial. Yes, Filipinas aren't alone in their quest to look "whiter." In fact, the place offers a dozen or so facials and body treatments that promise to defy gravity, if not turn back the hands of time.

"Guests can choose from either a relaxing massage or a shorter but more intense deep tissue massage," said Orias. "In any case, a quiet morning or a lazy afternoon spent in the spa can boost both mind and body."

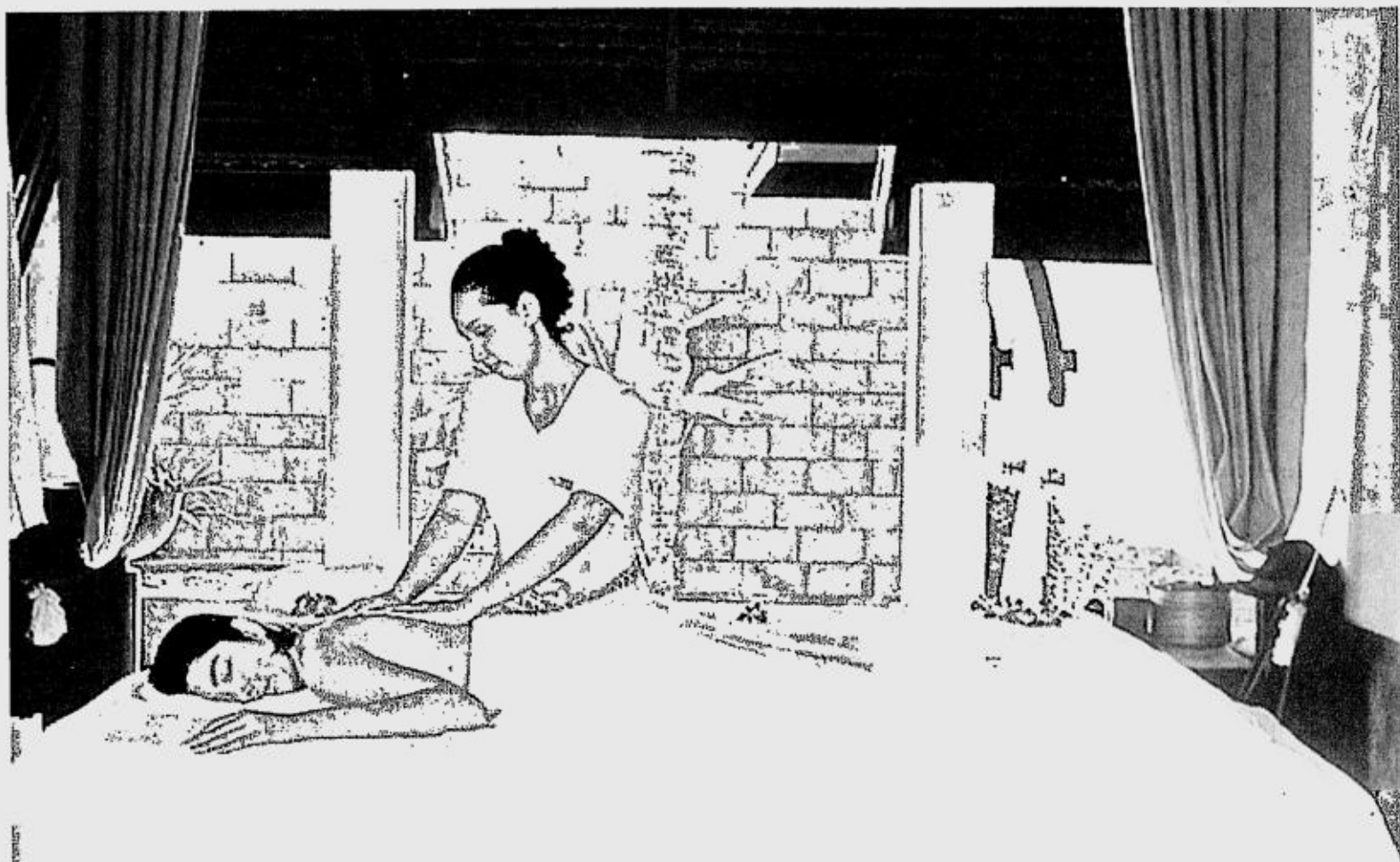
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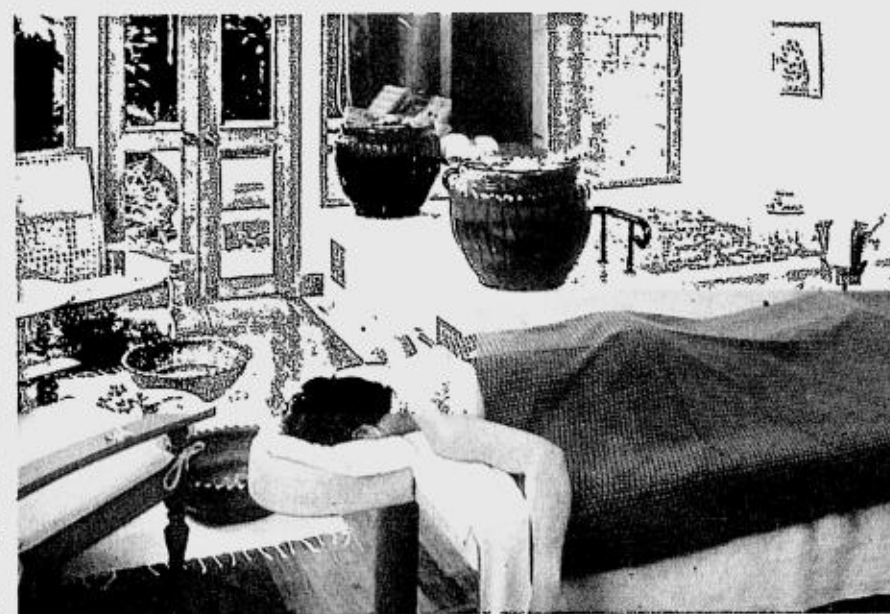
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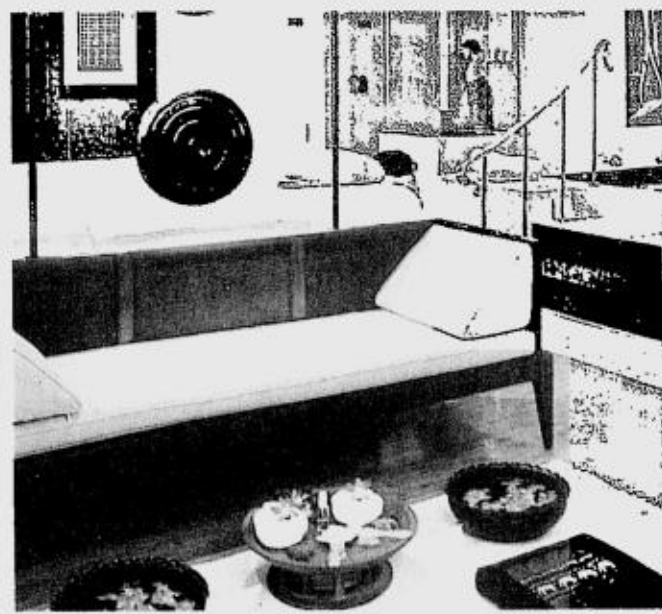
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Place for quiet private time

TOTAL Body Bliss, a new spa along Tandang Sora Avenue, may be just the right place for people wanting some quiet private time.

The spa is owned and operated by Raul Asuncion, who brings years of experience and expertise in running spas in Tagaytay City and San Fernando, Pampanga to the center.

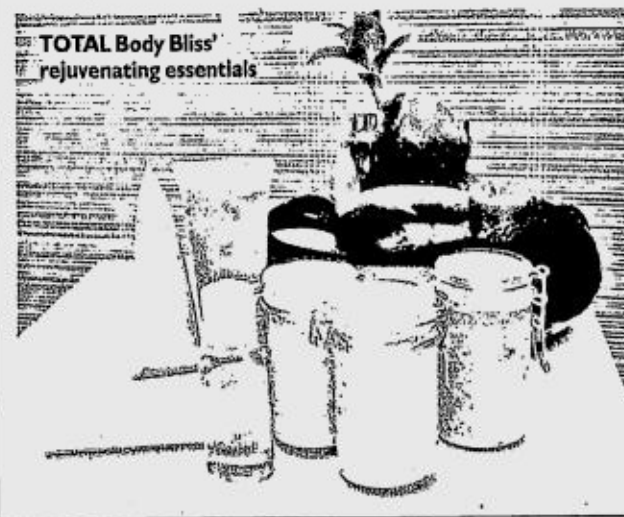
Easily accessible, the spa is decorated like a Filipino home, with colors in earth tones and Pinoy touches such as bamboo curtains, banig carpets and bayongs.

It has a Turkish Steam Bath, which is good for detoxifying the body. An in-house chemist

mixes essential oils for massages and different body treatments, including hair shine treatments, anti-wrinkle and whitening facials, herbal body scrubs, aromatic floral baths, spa mud body wraps, anti-cellulite massages and floral footbaths.

A specialty of the spa is the herbal body scrub. Clients can choose between coffee or olive scrub to exfoliate dead skin cells and make the skin soft and glowing.

Total Body Bliss at 51-D Tandang Sora Ave., Culiati, Quezon City (near Tierra Pura Subdivision), is open 10 a.m.-10 p.m. Call 9526697.



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Priest preaches clean living for spiritual and physical health

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

FR. FRANCIS Lucas was already an advocate of healthy eating and living. A life-threatening accident turned him into a practitioner as well.

Six years ago, the chair of the Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (Angoc) had just attended a workshop in Indonesia. Exhausted from the day's proceedings, he wearily flopped himself into the front passenger seat of a vehicle en route to Jakarta, the Indonesian capital.

Lucas ignored the seatbelt dangling by the car door, even when the sedan raced at 120 kilometers per hour. A seasoned Manilaño driver, he knew people who even slept through faster car rides. Suddenly, a loud noise ripped the air as the

car's right front wheel burst and sent the vehicle flying sideways, then crashing violently to the ground after turning thrice.

His life hung by a thread, with nearly all of his organs damaged. He suffered brain concussion. At the hospital, his gall bladder was removed. He underwent acupuncture for a year and popped 22 pills every day to simply stay alive, including tranquilizers before bedtime to put him to sleep.

The experience prompted him to take stock of his life. "I was forced to stop and look into my lifestyle. Do I want to live longer?" he says.

Before the accident, his life was filled with irony. Although he spent 30 years serving the rural poor by teaching them the rudiments of sustainable agriculture through organic farming, a hectic schedule prevented the priest from practicing what he preached—eating right and keeping the body healthy.



FR. FRANCIS Lucas



ONE of the exhibitors selling organic rice during the recent rice festival

Slow journey

And so began his shift to healthy and clean living. Lucas had long believed—way before organic became a household term—that anything consumed that was not natural, such as processed food, would eventually destroy a person. After his unfortunate accident, he set out to prove his theories right.

Slowly and painfully he began exercising, meditating and eating organic food. He says organic food aids the body to heal itself, not necessarily to detoxify the system. Today, Lucas takes only two pills a day instead of 22. He has also been off tranquilizers for more than two years now.

"The body has an innate capacity to heal itself. Organic food supplements our body's needs for nutrition. It's a balancing act. If you eat synthetic food you slowly [weaken] that innate capability. There's too much garbage and poison in synthetic food that we kill ourselves very slowly by consuming it," he says.

A living testament to the benefits of healthy living, Lucas says eating organic helped to give him more power to be what he can be and live life to the fullest. He conveyed this message to the INQUIRER during the recent organic rice festival, "Rice to the Challenge! Eat Healthy, Eat Organic", at the Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City, presented by Angoc with the Philippine Development Assistance Program.

Organic lifestyle

Organic rice is grown using only natural fertilizers, such as peat moss, compost, manure, etc. It is produced without pesticides, has lower sugar content and higher fiber values than grain used with a lot of chemicals.

During the festival, on exhibit/sale were produce from the provinces of Ifugao, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Camarines Sur, Bukidnon and Agusan del Sur.

The most famous and most expensive variety was Tinawon from Ifugao Province. Tinawon is grown on the historic rice terraces only once a year, traditionally for the Ifugao family's own consumption and special rituals. (The continued practice of organic farming on the rice terraces is expected to help in its restoration and preservation.)

Organic rice comes in many varieties—white, brown, red, fragrant, polished, unpolished, whole or medium grain, long or short grain—and different tastes. The texture may be a little too coarse for the uninitiated, but long-term benefits should help in overcoming the initial unease.

Fiber, for instance, abundant in organic rice, has been found to prevent major ailments including cancer, gastrointestinal and heart diseases. Oils in rice bran, retained in the unpolished variety, has been shown to help decrease serum cholesterol and, consequently, lower the risk of heart diseases. Simply put, organic produce ensures better health.

"You cannot go against nature because nature has its own capacity to produce, reproduce and recycle," says Lucas. "What's happening right now is synthetic [food] has become the rule, not the exception to the rule."

For the past 20 years, organic food has steadily gained popularity and support from the public, Lucas says, compared to 35 years ago when nobody believed in organic farming, not even him. Although organic rice retails between P30-60 per kilo, more expensive than the other types, he believes that if farmers shift to organic production prices will fall.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph



ORGANIC rice comes in many variants—white, brown, red, fragrant, polished, unpolished, whole or medium grain, long or short grain—and different tastes.

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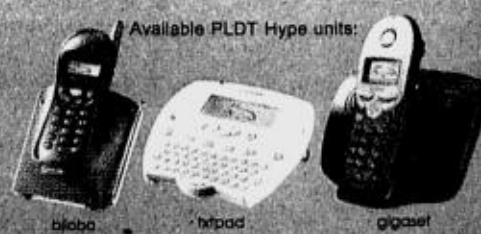
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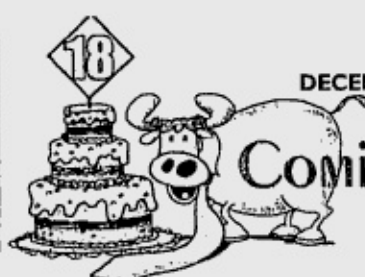
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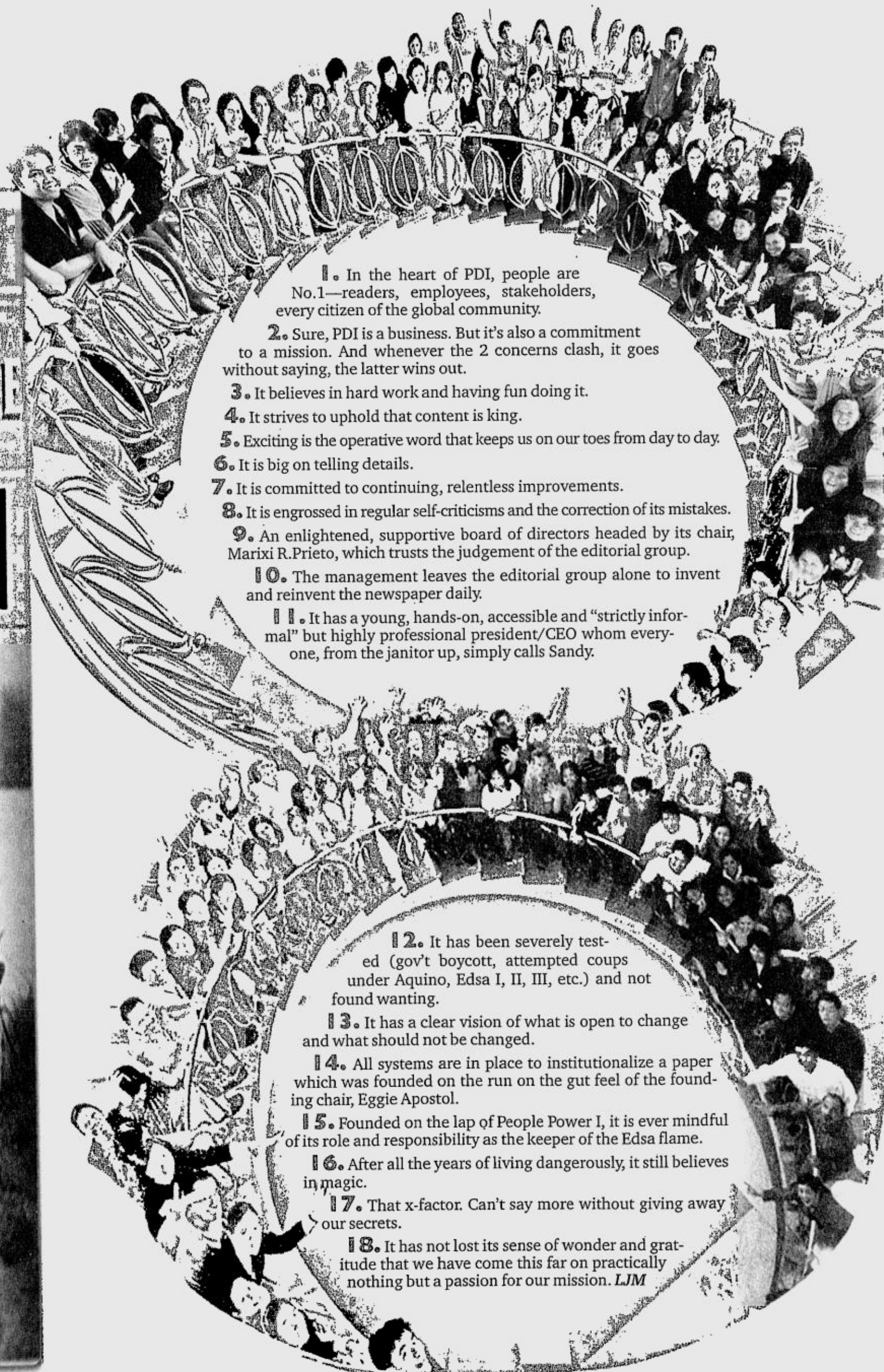


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Why at 18 years old, Inquirer is No. 1



1. In the heart of PDI, people are No. 1—readers, employees, stakeholders, every citizen of the global community.

2. Sure, PDI is a business. But it's also a commitment to a mission. And whenever the 2 concerns clash, it goes without saying, the latter wins out.

3. It believes in hard work and having fun doing it.

4. It strives to uphold that content is king.

5. Exciting is the operative word that keeps us on our toes from day to day.

6. It is big on telling details.

7. It is committed to continuing, relentless improvements.

8. It is engrossed in regular self-criticisms and the correction of its mistakes.

9. An enlightened, supportive board of directors headed by its chair, Marixi R. Prieto, which trusts the judgement of the editorial group.

10. The management leaves the editorial group alone to invent and reinvent the newspaper daily.

11. It has a young, hands-on, accessible and "strictly informal" but highly professional president/CEO whom everyone, from the janitor up, simply calls Sandy.

12. It has been severely tested (gov't boycott, attempted coups under Aquino, Edsa I, II, III, etc.) and not found wanting.

13. It has a clear vision of what is open to change and what should not be changed.

14. All systems are in place to institutionalize a paper which was founded on the run on the gut feel of the founding chair, Eggie Apostol.

15. Founded on the lap of People Power I, it is ever mindful of its role and responsibility as the keeper of the Edsa flame.

16. After all the years of living dangerously, it still believes in magic.

17. That x-factor. Can't say more without giving away our secrets.

18. It has not lost its sense of wonder and gratitude that we have come this far on practically nothing but a passion for our mission. LJM

And now a few words from the chair...



By Marixi R. Prieto

JUST sharing with you, dear readers, some thoughts rushing through my mind as I think back with much gratitude for the blessings we had received the past year.

Topmost is my gratitude to you, dear readers, and the men and women who have kept faith with the mission/vision of the company. It is their hard work that continues to put the company in top shape. That is why to me people always come first. For the convenience of the Inquirer people, for instance, the board of directors and I have decided to build additional office space. And to think that when we first moved into our own building in Makati in 1995, we could show off wide open spaces as the main feature of our headquarters. Aside, of course from our signature grand stairway.

Looking beyond, I am very excited about the new projects that are on tap, some already taking shape (Read all about it in this anniversary supplement).

The projects indicate we are quite ready and willing to embrace the amazing changes that are happening all around us. But then, changes do not mean at all that we are letting go of the things that had brought us to where we are today. Like our core values. Like passion, commitment, being people-centered, in believing in the Filipino.

Even as we have to adapt to change, we will stay the course. Because we will balance the new and exciting with the old and stabilizing order that has kept the foundation of the company solid. This is the irony: To ensure the paper's growth, there has got to be changes but at the same time we have to stick to the things—our core values certainly—that have made us grow and keep growing.

Just now, I am worried about the Filipino's future in his own homeland. The worrisome state is reflected daily in our paper. Where is our country going? I don't know the answers. I only know that our paper has the responsibility to help the Filipino help the country get back on its feet to stand shoulder to shoulder with the global community. Please help us help the Filipino.

PRIETO: Full of gratitude for people and for the planned changes in the company rooted on all-time core values.

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The movie in Eggie's mind was egging her to have a daily

By Lorna Kalaw-Tirol

(The following is an excerpt from "Journalism with Flare and Fire," an article on the PDI founding chair Eugenia "Eggie" Duran Apostol from the book "Seven in the Eye of History" edited by Asuncion David-Maramba)

THEN CAME, in November 1985, Marcos' announcement of a snap presidential election the following February. It was the sign Eggie Apostol had been waiting for.

"With the snap election called, I could not sleep. Here was the opportunity for a daily newspaper. Shall we? Should we? We must," she told her friend Doreen (Fernandez).

The stalwarts of the alternative press would have nothing to do with Eggie's dream. At a breakfast meeting in January that year, she had tried to convince Joaquin "Chino" Roces of the defunct Manila Times, Teodoro Locsin Sr. and his junior of the Philippines Free Press, Raul Locsin of Business Day, Betty Go Belmonte of Fookien Times and Jose Burgos of Malaya to join her in a publishing project.

"I asked them," Eggie remembers, "if they thought it a good idea to band together, with the strength of numbers, for one single effort at opposing Marcos in one combined newspaper. I told them maybe it was time for a consortium to come out with a daily. They refused.

Not another paper

"Chino said he wouldn't be responsible for what happens to the employees. Teddy Locsin Sr. said he didn't want to legalize the regime by coming out with a paper. Raul already had Business Day and Joe had Malaya. They said it wasn't the time to come out with another paper. Having had very little first-hand experience with media repression, I guess I was more stubborn than they. The movie in my mind was looking for a scenario in which media could hit at the dictator and get away with it."

"Something seemed to be pressing me, egging me, that we should have a daily. But I must have felt scared. Who am I to come out with a daily? If only Chino had said yes," she mused. With no support forthcoming from the big publishers, Eggie sounded out other colleagues in the media, among them Betty Go Belmonte, Letty Magsanoc, Doris Nuyda, Max Soliven and Louie Beltran,

and friends outside the profession like lawyer Eliseo Alampay and academician Dr. Florangel Rosario Braid. Fortunately for Eggie, they were willing to take the risk along with her and among themselves raised a million pesos in seed money.

Coop structure

With her vast and varied experience in both newspapers and magazines, Eggie knew only too well that publishing a weekly was different from publishing a daily. "A weekly needs a small capitalization, and is not too sensitive to political winds. A daily needs millions. A daily, to be truly independent, must not be owned by big business or by politicians, but by professionals who are able to balance their personal views with the needs of the community."

Flor Braid suggested that one solution to the problem of media independence was a cooperative structure of ownership. She theorized that media people who own their newspaper or television station would have less pressure from interest groups and therefore enjoy more independence. After two seminars on the cooperative type of media ownership, the partners were convinced it was the direction they wanted for their paper. They targeted the middle of 1986 for organizing their cooperative—to give them time "to gather enough like-minded journalist and managers."

Fast-tracked plans

Marcos' announcement of the holding of a snap election forced members of the group to fast-track their plans. To give themselves a legal personality immediately and to facilitate the registration of the paper which they agreed to call Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI), they had themselves listed as a corporation rather than as a cooperative, but with this significant clause in their by-laws: that only permanent employees could own stocks in the paper. Furthermore, all the board members were issued an equal number of shares. Thus did the board indicate its determination to go cooperative. After a year, all of the INQUIRER's 180 people owned shares in the paper.

Unionism

The concept of cooperativism, how-



PDI founding chair Eugenia "Eggie" Duran Apostol

ever, did not have a chance to prove it could work. Eggie says sadly, "The young members of the staff were attracted to unionism, which won over cooperativism." Though disappointed, the board welcomed the formation of the union and in 1987 signed with its officers a generous collective bargaining agreement which became the envy of the rest of the media industry.

Luis D. Beltran was named executive editor of the INQUIRER; Eggie was elected chairperson of the board of management. She also became the first woman publisher of a broadsheet in Manila.

First home, a 'cockpit'

The paper's first home was a 100-square-meter office with no toilet in a rundown one-story building in Port Area. (Owned by the Go family.-Ed) A staff of 40—editors, reporters, correspondents, copy boys and other editorial people—shared three telephones and 20 old Olympia typewriters. Typesetters had to

make do with cumbersome IBM machines; an antiquated Murosawa head-maker did the headlines. In that cramped office it was hardly news when a reporter's copy got misplaced or lost.

Most of the reporters literally made the giant leap from university to newsroom, compensating for their lack of experience with a great deal of idealism and passion.

Fe Zamora, one of those young reporters, would later write of that newsroom they called a "cockpit": "The PDI must have been the only newspaper which started out with more reporters than column inches (and beats) available. There were more deskmen than desks, too. There was a banquet-size dining table for the reporters. There was a round table where the 'cadres' or political beat reporters held their meetings."

Power failure

The paper never had a dry run. Power failure hit the office on the first workday, but by dawn of Dec. 9, 1985 the staff were reading the first copies of the paper, hot off the press. They drew their first salaries the next day.

The banner headline of the first issue was "Cory rebuffs Doy demands"; below the fold was another article titled "Marcos claims God ordered him to lead Filipinos."

Interesting times

In a statement of purpose, publisher Max Soliven wrote: "The job of a newspaper is to report the news. That, in a word, is what the Philippine Daily Inquirer is all about... We do not believe that there is such a thing as an 'alternative press' as a counterweight to the so-called 'crony press.' There is only one kind of journalism—and it is neither alternative nor crony. It is a journalism that reports the facts, neither tailoring them to suit our friends, nor twisting them to dismay or destroy our enemies... There is a Chinese saying, 'May you live in interesting times.' We are often misled by the benign sound of this sentence, but it is not a blessing. It is a Chinese curse. We are, in fulfillment of that mischievous wish, living in very interesting times. The Philippine Daily Inquirer will chronicle these times. With candor, and, we trust,

with courage."

The issue, which was distributed only in Metro Manila, sold 30,000 copies.

In July 1986 the INQUIRER moved to a bigger office, the old Madrid restaurant on Epifanio de los Santos Avenue (Edsa) in Mandaluyong. Fifteen months later it was time to move to even more spacious quarters, BF Condominium in Intramuros, where a modern electronic newsroom awaited the staff.

'Mosquito press'

Marcos called the INQUIRER the mosquito press; media colleagues branded it "yellow journalism" and described its anything-goes layout as an unmade bed. Such criticism, however, did not seem to bother the paper's loyal readers, who enjoyed it as they would "delicious Chinese food served in a dirty Binondo restaurant."

As opposition candidate Cory Aquino's presidential campaign gained momentum and the INQUIRER started to reach the provinces, its circulation ballooned so rapidly that printing had to be done in six publishing companies, including two newspaper presses owned by Marcos' cronies. As early as midnight, dealers queued outside the INQUIRER office to grab the next day's issue.

Oplan Everlasting

The INQUIRER's phenomenal success as a fearless opposition paper was not lost on the Marcos dictatorship. In the heat of the presidential campaign, a top-secret military plan code-named "Oplan Everlasting" was leaked to the press. Under the plan all leaders of the opposition would be arrested after Marcos' inauguration and detained on Corregidor island. Eggie Apostol, her editors and columnists were at the top of the list and, according to the rumor, they would be fed to sharks in Manila Bay rather than detained. Absurd as that plan sounded, it was not enough to intimidate Eggie. She dismisses the honor of having been enemy number one on Marcos' list with an amused "It was alphabetical."

Shortly before the "People Power" revolt in February 1986, the INQUIRER was selling as many as 300,000 copies daily, outpacing Bulletin Today which until then had been number one.

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Honey, I'm pregnant again

Excerpts from a speech delivered by Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Inquirer president and CEO, at the 18th Advertising Congress of the Philippines, Baguio City, Nov. 22, 2003

1. The Inq is everywhere

We are the only newspaper in the country that operates in four printing locations, Makati, Laguna, Cebu and Davao. While others are still trying to fly in their copies to Davao, we are sending the news pages electronically and printing the copies directly on site. Once typhoon season strikes, cancelled flights to Cebu for example will mean none of our competitors will have a newspaper there. INQUIRER is the only paper in town when that happens because we ship our copies straight from Cebu over land.

Hence, we not only enjoy the greatest readership nationwide, we are also the only paper that can guarantee that your ad reaches its destination rain or shine.

2. You asked for it, you got it

Like many newspapers around the world, the INQUIRER is beginning to focus more and more on its fickle readers and their changing needs. By using market research, we are gaining more insights into the mind of our readers particularly their attitudes and interests.

For example, research has shown that our Sports section has never really been a strength. After learning this, we re-launched our Sports to make it more appealing to readers. It is now a separate section with more stories and more action color photos. Our Entertainment section too was spruced up, with more pages and exciting stories.

3. The good news

While some of newspaper purists have criticized some of our moves to improve our "soft" news side, the feedback we have been getting is that many Filipinos have grown weary of politics and the never ending mudslinging. Providing our readers with some light reading options, away from our sober front page ensures continued loyalty to our newspaper.

4. Black is green

INQUIRER is also very supportive of environmental causes. We are the only newspaper that uses soya ink for printing and actively

promoting recycling through a program that we have started three years ago called the New Paper Drive.

5. Yippeel Junior is in town

For the really, really young (ages 8 to 12), we have Junior Inquirer that hopes to develop the readers of tomorrow. The innovation we are doing with JI is in its distribution. We are distributing 50,000 free copies directly to 100 schools around the city. In many schools, JI is practically part of the curriculum.

6. Barkada

Much has been said about the large youth market in the Philippines. More than 60 percent of the population is aged 29 or younger. The challenge for all media is how best to capitalize on this.

INQUIRER has responded by coming up with innovative sections focused on the youth segment. 2BU is our young and hip lifestyle section for teens that appears every Wednesday. What makes 2BU click among the youth is the fact that it is created and written entirely by the youth.

On Saturdays, we have Saturday Special Super!, which appeals to the twenty-something set and is the only section that gives a weekly event guide to help the metro's young urbanites plan where to go and what to do.

Aside from our youth sections, the INQUIRER has invested in a comprehensive youth readership program, which benefits more than 4,000 college and high school students nationwide every year. This award-winning program, which involves seminars, debates, school tours and contests, has been making in-roads in cultivating newspaper reading among the youth. It has also provided advertisers with opportunities to reach the youth through alternative below-the-line strategies that only the INQUIRER can provide.

We have also recently launched a readership campaign which was aided by a texting game and which has enabled us to develop our own database of young readers called the INQUIRER Readers' Club.

7. Big ideas welcome here

Today, more advertisers are demanding more value for their advertising money. While doing so, a main concern is rising above the clutter of ads through creative executions that grab the readers' attention. They may involve adding perfume to our ink so that people not only see the ad, they can smell it too! What a post it ad? A round print ad instead of a typi-

cal square? Or enclosing an entire section in an advertising cover?

While these "out-of-the-box" executions are often shocking to our editors and often flies in the face of traditional publishing norms, no one can deny that we will see more of this day after day.

At the INQUIRER, our policy is not to stifle this creativity but to welcome it. Creative executions can have a multiplier effect on the effectiveness of your ad. While we need to put our foot down and disallow the ad if it threatens to affect the credibility of the paper, we believe that such "out-of-the-box" advertisements need not involve pushing the limits of our editorial policy. It can involve innovative ways of printing as well. Take the case of our new product called the "Super Panoramic Spread." The effect is very captivating to the reader.

8. Surprise, surprise

True to the spirit of innovation and our own brand of journalism, the INQUIRER will continue to blaze the trail by providing relevant, exciting and timely news and information using different platforms-print, Internet, wireless technology and very soon television.

Starting January next year, INQUIRER will be available not only through print and on-line but also on air through a prime time news program following a unique current affairs-magazine format that is the first of its kind. It will give prime time viewers an in-depth presentation of today's top stories and special features coming from the different sections of the newspaper.

INQUIRER president
Sandy Prieto-
Romualdez
addressing
the Ad Congress.



Chances are you can make another ad.

With our Digital Ad Delivery System, you could produce your full color or black-and-white ad at a fraction of the cost of current color separation charges. That's up to 75% savings. Plus, our breakthrough system is flawless. So there's no need to go through

the time consuming task of producing and checking positives or negatives. All you have to do is submit to us your digital file. We'll even re-run your ad for free if you encounter pre-press problems. With all these going for you, you're more likely to come

out with more media placements instead. Call Sonny at 811-3383 or (0917) 529-7171.

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With our Digital Ad Delivery System, you could produce your full color or black-and-white ad at a fraction of the cost of current color separation charges. That's up to 75% savings. Plus, our breakthrough system is flawless. So there's no need to go through

the time consuming task of producing and checking positives or negatives. All you have to do is submit to us your digital file. We'll even re-run your ad for free if you encounter pre-press problems. With all these going for you, you're more likely to come

out with more media placements instead. Call Sonny at 811-3383 or (0917) 529-7171.

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INS(tant) news in a non-print world

By Abelar S. Ulanday
Associate Editor

STORIES and photos have always been the most sought-after content from the INQUIRER.

Over the years, there had been countless requests to reprint INQUIRER news stories, feature articles, special reports and opinion columns in various local and foreign publications.

Photos have been bought and used by publishers, book authors and local and foreign news magazines, as well.

Today, the INQUIRER content also fills up on-line news and databank sites.

The distribution and transmission of the INQUIRER content have been, and continue to be, carried out by the Inquirer News Service, or INS.

It's a lean staff within the Editorial group that was set up three years ago to handle requests for reprints and usage of INQUIRER content. But its main job is to service the editorial needs of INQ7.net, the news website put up jointly by the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER and GMA 7 network in 2001.

Shared scheme

Today, the INQUIRER's partnership with INQ7 has grown from initially a supplier-buyer setup to a shared scheme. This means the INQUIRER can also use INQ7's own materials from its pool of writers.

A similar scheme now works between the INQUIRER and its affiliate company, the Inquirer Publications Inc. (IPI). But this is another story. (For the story, see Page H1)

Foreign subscribers

INS has been sending stories to four foreign-

based subscribers, which are basically research databanks. Most clients of these subscribers are research institutions and the academe. INQUIRER content is sent daily to the subscribers through FTP (File transfer protocol) or e-mail.

Extending brand name

But more than just supplying the users with INQUIRER items, the partnerships with these subscribers practically extend the reach and breadth of the INQUIRER brand.

INS has also been transmitting stories to the Asian News Network (ANN), a grouping of newspapers from 10 Asian countries sharing their stories and photos, and in the process providing news to surfers and browsers from an Asian standpoint.

Among ANN's members are the INQUIRER (Philippines), Straits Times (Singapore), The Star (Malaysia), Asahi Shimbun (Japan), The Times of India

(India), The Nation (Thailand), and China Daily (China).

Technology bites

Technology has enabled more people to gain more access to information. Call it explosion, implosion or whatever, but there is simply an information overload today.

In addition to the traditional newspapers (which many of us can hardly read from cover-to-cover on a daily basis), radio and television (free channels and cable), there's the Internet. If your laptop or desktop computer is not within reach, you can rely on your cell phone or PDA (personal digital assistant) for a quick rundown on the latest developments in practically every aspect of human activity and commerce.

Despite the overload, a lot of people just won't be stopped from getting the latest news. They still want to be informed, to be "in" on the latest fashion and trends,



INQUIRER News Service staff, (from left), Rodelio Roberto, Stella Gonzales, and Robelyn Reyes.

ROMY HOMILLADA

to know who dates who, to know if the peso has recovered or whether it's time to buy or sell stocks, etc.

After what happened to former President Joseph Estrada in 2001, nobody can dispute the power of text messages

to rally a nation into action.

Leader in non-print

This is the world INS intends to go into. It aims to become a part, no, not just

INS(TANT)/G6

From 1 to 35M, 18 lucky numbers

By Minerva Generalao
Head, PDI Research

1st is the rank of the INQUIRER among nationally circulated broadsheets in terms of readership, according to the latest Asia Research Organization Inc. trimedia surveys.

3 is the average number of stories a PDI National and Metro reporter submits each day. Some reporters submit as many as seven stories on news-heavy days.

4 is the number of PDI bureaus. Their 80 to 100 correspondents across the country make PDI truly a national newspaper.

7 is the number of effective habits PDI employees have been trained to possess. It is also the number of annual critical success factors (CSFs) that have been cascaded down to all PDI officers and staff as yardsticks in making objectives and action plans.

9 is the number of years (1994-2002) the INQUIRER has topped the annual Asia Research Organization's trimedia readership surveys.

12 is the number of years Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc has served as PDI's editor in chief. She's PDI's third editor in chief; the first was Luis "Louie" Beltran, followed briefly by Federico Pascual.

20 is the average number of grade schoolers who get their first stint as journalists by serving as correspondents of PDI Junior Inquirer.

40 is the number of editors, reporters, correspondents, photographers and other editorial employees who put together the first issues of the INQUIRER in December 1985.

44 is the percentage of INQUIRER's share of the advertising market as of August 2003.

57 is the percentage of Filipinos belonging to class ABC who read the INQUIRER, according to the AC Nielsen Media Index in 2002.

400 is the average number of raw photo files taken by PDI photographers in a day.

1997 was the year PDI employees got their highest profit share at P107,802.64 per employee. PDI employees started to receive their profit share in 1987.

1998 was the year PDI business excellence was recognized by the prestigious Agora Awards for Marketing.

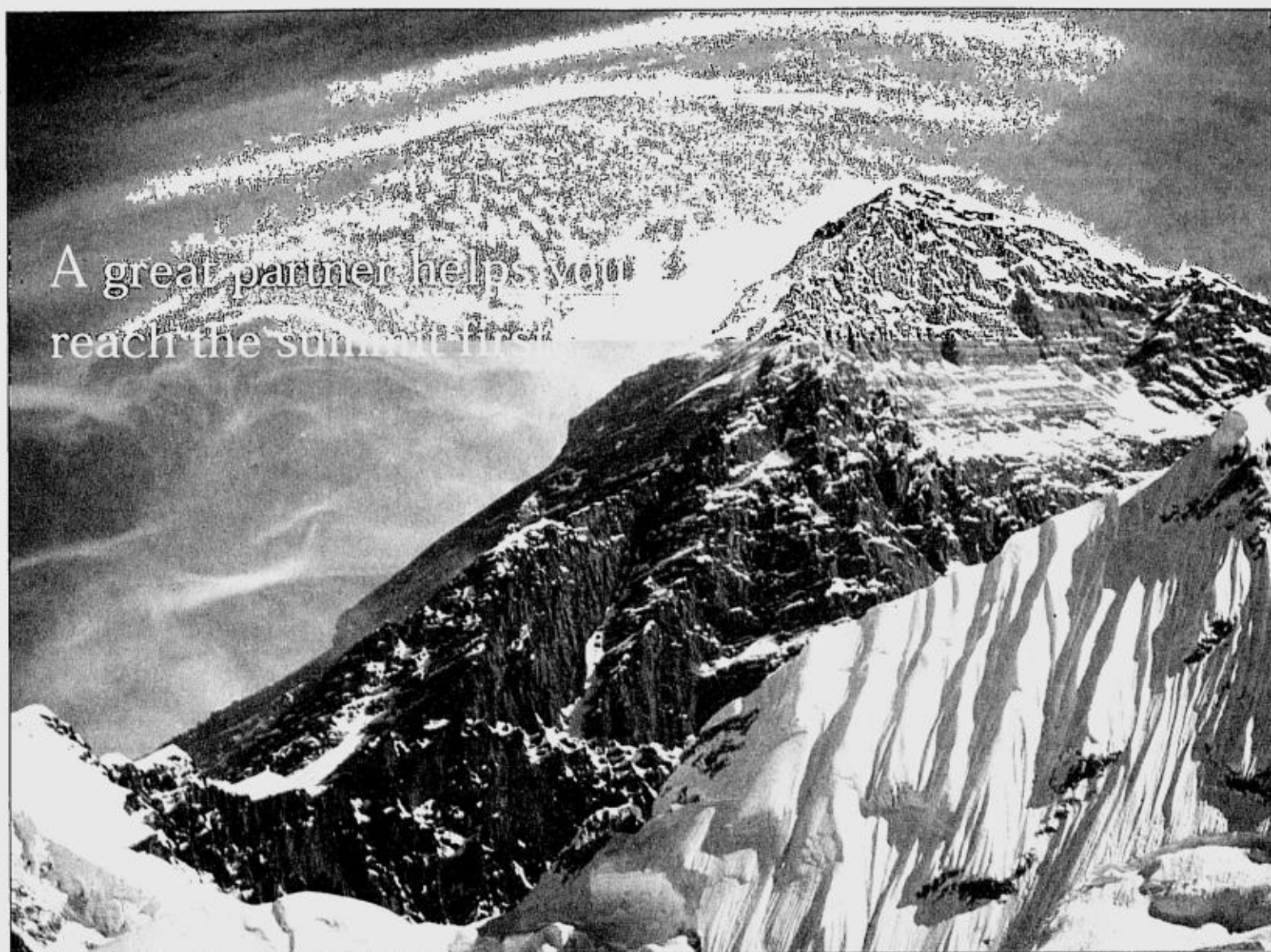
1,190 is the estimated number of trees spared from the saw as a result of the collection of some 70,000 kilos of old newspapers in PDI's New Paper Drive this year.

115,000 is the number of copies of INQUIRER Libre distributed for free at Metro Rail Transit and Light Rail Transit 1 and 2 systems stations. Libre is also available in the arrival area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the WG&A Superferry terminal in Manila.

230,000 is the number of kilos of old newspapers and tabloids collected since the start of PDI's New Paper Drive in July 2001.

2,100,000 is the average number of Filipinos who read the INQUIRER. As of August 2003, the INQUIRER accounted for 65 percent of the circulation market share.

35,000,000 is the average page views per month of INQ7.net, making it the number one news website in the Philippines and among the top 15 in the world.



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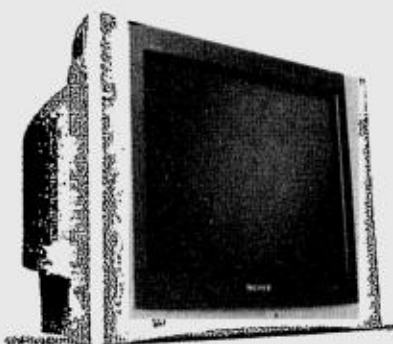
George Washington and Thomas Jefferson



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Riding, reading fast and fancy free

By Chito de la Vega
Editor in Chief, Libre

A NEWSPAPER to be given away for free? You've got to be kidding.

Now, two years after that serious idea was born, nobody is laughing at INQUIRER Libre, but the multitude of readers of the tabloid-sized English-Filipino daily is certainly having a good time.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. publication is distributed for free primarily in the Metrorail Transit and the Light Railway Transit 1 and 2 systems. Libre is also available in the arrival area of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the WG&A Superferry terminal at the Manila port area.

"We knew it was risky [financially] but we felt we needed to provide something that would help encourage reading among the commuting public," said Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, Philippine Daily Inquirer president and chief executive officer.

The encouragement is apparently working. Libre now has a daily circulation of 115,000—or 15 percent more than its first print run on Nov. 19, 2001.

These figures are backed by a periodic audit by Punongbayan and Araullo-Grant Thornton. This year alone, Libre has been audited four times.

Fast-food news

One of the objectives of the INQUIRER group in publishing a free-newspaper was to expand readership among those who are not natural readers of the parent paper. Basically, these were people who either could not afford to buy a newspaper every day or did not have the time to open a broadsheet newspaper because they were on-the-go.

Libre provides these nonreaders a chance to read up on the news, fast-food style.

A survey commissioned by the INQUIRER last September showed that 95 percent of Libre's readers come from the broad C and D socioeconomic group, two segments of society that broadsheet newspapers hardly reach.

More female readers

Libre is everything that most Philippine tabloids are not: decent, wholesome, posi-



FREE-FOR-ALL at Inquirer Libre, with (from left) Dennis Eroa, Cookie Micaller, Ritche Sabado, Romel Lalata, Cathy Yamsuan and editor in chief Chito de la Vega.

tive. This has obviously attracted a substantial number of female readers.

Traditionally, Filipino female readers have shied away from tabloids because of their racy image. In the case of Libre, however, 55 percent of its readers are women.

Libre also has a substantially young readership. According to the survey, 48 percent of its readers are in the 18-29 age bracket.

Intense reaction

While it may be a bite-size version of PDI, Libre has been able to elicit the same passion from its readers as its hugely successful parent newspaper.

Throughout its 18-year history, INQUIRER readers have shown a "we-own-this-newspaper" attitude, which has been acknowledged as one of the reasons PDI has remained the industry leader.

Libre readers have shown the same intense reaction.

"People value high quality at a low price," said Romualdez. "Imagine how they respond to high quality that comes for free."

Testimonials

Last October, Libre published an announcement about a free scriptwriting workshop to be conducted by the multi-awarded Ricky Lee. The reaction of Libre readers surprised Lee.

He said that aside from those who saw it on TV, the most number of calls received by the workshop were from people who read it in INQUIRER Libre.

Aileen Dy, a young entrepreneur, got the same reception. She said a Libre article "brought in nonstop inquiries about the baking lessons that we offer. I had to take in a permanent secretary just to receive the calls that came in because of my exposure in Libre. I hope you and your staff will continue to help us small entrepreneurs spur our small business undertakings."

Capt. Anthony Dan Ogbinar, executive director of International Seafarers Action Center, said: "We have been conducting this series of monthly forums and we noticed that the attendance doubles whenever our announcement was printed by your publication, partic-

ularly in the months of October and August. We also monitored an immediate response of an average of 20 calls every day inquiring about the activity and they reported to us that they saw the notice in Libre."

Heartwarming letter

Perhaps the most gratifying letter Libre received this year was that from two senior citizens.

Last August, the Rotary Club of Makati Central wrote to thank Libre for publishing its "Tulong sa Bingi" project. After the week-long project, the group said it was able to distribute 461 hearing aid units to 347 patients.

Just a few weeks ago, Libre received letters from Arnulfo Gonzales and Rogelio Arcega thanking the newspaper for publishing the story. They said they were able to get free hearing aids after reading about the Rotary project in Libre.

From its original mission of encouraging people to read, Libre has also given some of its readers the gift of hearing.

INS(tant) news ...

From page G5

part but a leader in the non-print world of news and information.

So when you click on your mouse and access INQ7, you'll read a breaking news on things and events that happened 20 minutes, half-an-hour or an hour ago.

When you open your cell phones or PDA and push a key or point a cursor to a key function, you'll get a rundown of the latest happenings.

When you tune in to a radio station, you'll hear who has just been declared candidate of this and that party.

And what's more exciting is that it won't be limited to news but could include information on business and trade matters, your favorite restaurants, movies, important social events, stage plays and cultural shows, even information on where to go for bargain sales.

Isn't this wonderful?

INS will be there

As part of the its commitment to serve the public better, the INQUIRER wants to enable people to access any INQUIRER stuff wherever they are and whenever it is convenient for them to do so.

What's going to make this commitment possible is our partnership with our affiliates—INQ7 and IPI.

Tech geek

The appointment of Stella Gonzales as INS editor has also set the direction where INS hopes to be next year.

A veteran reporter and a seasoned deskperson before her appointment to INS, Stella brings with her years of experience in gathering news and packaging them into readable pieces. She's a tech geek, too, which will help a lot when INS involves itself in a technology-driven information era.



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IN HIGH GEAR, the Special Sections staff turns out Motoring, Real Estate, and Science and Health. The staff has (from left) Tessa Salazar, Dianne Villafuerte, editor Cesar Mangawang, assistant editor Stella Gonzales, Charles Buban and Tin-Tin Ang.



SUPER TROUPERS Tim Yap as creative director and Pam Pastor as editor are on top of things at Super!



STARS ARE SHINING and things are looking up at Entertainment, where three is certainly good company, with (from left) Marinel Cruz, editor Louie C. Camino and Nini Valera.



LET THE GAMES BEGIN, and the new Sports section team is ready to cover them. The team includes (from left) Jong Arcano, assistant editor Edwin Villanueva and editor Teddyvic Melendrez.

Sections jump out of the closet

By Louie C. Camino

ALL of a sudden, they're leaping out of the pages and grabbing at you, catching your eye, gripping your attention. They're alive, and they're kicking ass!

All of a sudden, they each have their own identities, and they make sure you notice it, with pictures that swirl with vibrant colors, with layouts that roll and swing and soar, and with stories that prod and provoke even as they present the facts and nothing but.

For the past years, these INQUIRER sections looked like each other, except perhaps for the section logos and the subjects of their stories. And then, starting in April, the changes arrived and announced themselves, refusing to be ignored.

Today, Sports is jumping with action and life.

Motoring has shifted gears and is leaving competition sputtering in the dust.

Science and Health is robustly healthy.

Real Estate is expanding its boundaries.

Saturday Special became even more special with the addition of Super.

And show biz has never been more fun, more colorful, more urgent, more here and now. That's Entertainment!

As if you haven't noticed.

Sports surges

Starting April 24, Sports, edited by Teddyvic Melendres, became eight full-color pages four days a week, and back to back with Entertainment the rest of the week.

It used to be that the average number of pages was 1-and-1/2, Melendres points out. Now it's five pages, not including the ads.

Focus is on bigger photos, bigger headlines, more reader-friendly layout.

It has more features and more stories about X-games, such as duathlon, skateboarding, mountain climbing.

Motoring zooms

According to editor Cesar Mangawang, starting June 2003, Motoring has:

- More unusual slants of stories.
- More human interest stories. Indeed, what the Motoring section gives you are stories that are not the usual sleep-inducing space fillers but grabbers like "Traversing the nautical highway," "Nothing is impossible for this paraplegic driver," "Yes, Henry, miracles still happen," "Vehicle adaptation for the elderly and physically challenged."

Real Estate on solid ground

Real Estate, also edited by Mangawang, now also has:

- Unusual slants on stories about rent-to-own property, low-cost housing using alternative materials, high-tech glass house, unusual architectural designs.
- A regular column by Alexis Acacio offering practical tips on home building and remodeling.

As in the case of Motoring, the improved Real Estate section now elicits more than the usual inquiries from readers about the featured products, property and services, says Mangawang.

Science and Health throbs

Put together by Mangawang and assistant Science and Health editor Stella Gonzales, this section now includes:

- A young columnist, Massie Santos-Ballon, who writes on "light" but interesting innovations and discoveries in science and health, to encourage young readers to be more interested in the subject.
- Graphics that accompany stories to make them more attractive and easier to understand, when space allows.

Super duper

Created by contributing editor Pam Pastor and creative director Tim Yap, Super almost defies description.

- Its pages are splashed with Pucci colors and cutting-edge pictorials.

- Its columnists include Megadaughter KC Concepcion and Marcos granddaughter Aimee Araneta.

- It "spends" 24 hours with its celebrity subjects.

- Its subjects range from hip hop and the Sex Bomb Dancers, to living with strange embarrassing names and "how to be a bohemian in 4 easy steps."

Its target is to pleasure the young urbanites on their nonworking days.

All-star cast

On April 20, Entertainment—drum roll, please—raised the curtains on its new show.

- "Out of the Closet," a Monday regular that goes right into the private spaces of celebrities, who are only too willing to throw open their doors and let the readers in. It has so far revealed that young star Jolina Magdangal has an old refrigerator working as a cabinet in her bedroom; TV host TJ Manotoc has a collection of Jolina dolls; Filipino-British model Derek Ramsay keeps a python under his dining table; actor Michael de Mesa has a replica of Boracay in his room; talk show host Boy Abunda has a whole bedroom turned

into a closet of designer clothes and shoes; and actor Victor Neri is not ashamed to show his reality-type clutter.

Now, we don't even have to call the stars to request them to let us into their closets. They call us.

- "Yesterday," a Friday retro feature on show biz people of yesteryears and where they are now, such as comedians Rudy Manlapaz, whose wish for a new thermos bottle by his bed came true several times over when readers responded, including First Gentleman

Mike Arroyo; comedian Dely Atay-Atayan, whose story and her illness touched many readers; '50s matinee idol Oscar Moreno, whom we featured a few months before he passed away; former dancer and "That's Entertainment" regular Jojo Alejar who is now a congressman's chief of staff.

- Did You Know? Now you know that these are short items that tease and tell on the stars and what they're seen doing in public places.

- Hard, factual news on show business, and we get them before the smoke

clears and while the bodies are still warm, including the recent bombshell marriage to Robin Padilla, and more juice on the Joey Marquez-Kris Aquino split—which subject, incidentally, was a consistent topnotcher on the INQUIRER website, INQ7, in terms of the number of hits.

And more changes and innovations are coming in the new year, but we're not telling yet. Just wait until they start grabbing and gripping you some more.

Kaming bahala sa Christmas party ninyo!

Mag Jollibee Paskong Langhap-Sarap Party Package

FREE delivery of food to venue. FREE announcement posters. FREE use of play streamers.

Book your party now!

Buhay Jollibee. Lalong sumasarap.

*Minimum P2000 food purchase. Promo until December 13 only. Contact your store manager for more details.

'Tis the Season to be jolly.
'Tis the Season to be at the

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Get a chance to WIN a SMART Buddy Amazing Phone in the **DAILY** raffle!



For every purchase of a NOKIA handset. Available only at Shockwave Mall Sites only from Nov. 15 to Dec. 15, 2003.



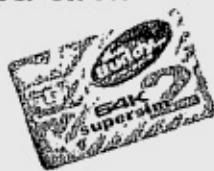
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SM Fairview UCF Costamall A
SM Bicutan 2nd floor between Oregon & Arwork
SM Bacoor UCF between SM Appliance & Goldlocks
Sta. Lucia Mall* G/F, Phase III near Jollibee
Alabang Town Center G/F, Old Wing between PCX & Mendez

Luzon
SM Baguio LGF, in front of staircase between Island Souvenirs & Freshaire
NE Pacific Mall, Cabanatuan Avenue 4
JC Enterprises, Santiago Entrance gate
Traders Square, Naga City G/F, Trade Square Bldg. Padre Burgos St., Naga City
Liana's Discount City, Calamba, Laguna G/F, center
Pague Mall, Urdaneta G/F Grocery section
Pacific Mall, Legaspi G/F area
Maharlika Mall, Baguio Lobby Area

Visayas/Mindanao
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C
SM Cebu LGF Atrium C

DECEMBER 1 - 15, 2003

Metro Manila
SM Megamall 2nd floor, bridgeway in front of French Baker
SM Centerpoint UCF, Costamall (Mass Area)
SM Southmall UCF, in front of Supermarket
SM North UCF, West Wing near National Bookstore
SM North UCF, between Jollibee & Tokyo Tokyo
SM North Edsa** City Center, G/F Costamall (Sylvia Santos)
Alabang Town Center* G/F, Old Wing between PCX & Mendez
Festival Mall 2nd floor, between Gardano & Body Shop

Luzon
SM Pagganjan, Consernamal, Mass Area between Pizza Hut & Watson's
SM Lucena G/F, in front of Atrium

SM Baguio LGF**, in front of staircase between Island Souvenirs & Freshaire
SM Marikina Entrance 4, in front of Mr. Quick
NE Pacific Mall, Cabanatuan Avenue 4
JC Enterprises, Santiago Entrance gate
Traders Square, Naga City G/F Trade Square Bldg. Padre Burgos St., Naga City
Liana's Discount City, Calamba, Laguna G/F, center
Magpie Mall, Urdaneta G/F Grocery section
Candy's Zamboanga, Tacloban Main Entrance
Maharlika Mall, Baguio Lobby Area

Visayas/Mindanao
SM Iloilo*** LGF East Wing in front of Alconado Kiosk
SM Davao G/F Atrium between Chawking & Prestige
SM Davao G/F Atrium between Chawking & Prestige
SM Davao G/F Atrium between Chawking & Prestige
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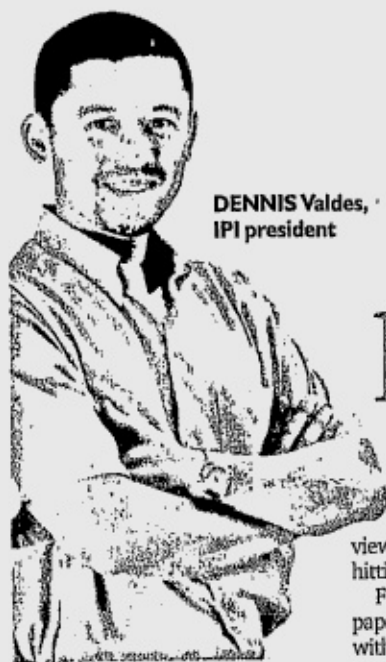
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DENNIS Valdes,
IPI president

By Alex Reyes
VP for Business Development, IPI

AT THE start of 2003, Inquirer Publications Inc. (IPI) had three titles in its portfolio. Now it is publishing five, and is expecting to give birth to a couple of more.

Why the fertility? One of IPI's objectives is to look for the niches where reader's needs are unmet, overlooked or simply ignored. In a world where industries are in flux, new communities sprout, and change is accelerating, chaos becomes the friend of IPI as the eddies from the swirl of events create untapped markets and new audiences to satisfy. In short, there will never be a shortage of niches to develop.

Why IPI

Inquirer Publications was created in 2001 to house all the publications of the Inquirer Group that did not carry the INQUIRER brand name. Thus, while PDI and INQUIRER Libre continue to be published by Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc., IPI is free to explore new titles that address the different needs and interests of specific groups. This way, the company can provide advertisers alternative platforms to reach their target markets.

On the Road

In bustling metropolitan Manila, two roads are the key arteries leading in and out of the capital. More than 500,000 vehicles pass through the North Luzon and South Luzon Expressways. To serve the millions of passengers who rely on the roads, IPI began publishing its first free newspapers—On The Road, for motorists on the north toll road, and South Express. Each is distributed twice a month at designated toll booths of both highways.

Together, the two titles give commuters updates on road conditions and feature stories about attractions surrounding the city. With the advent of the two titles, advertisers can now reliably communicate with commuters who traverse both highways.

Cebu Daily News

While IPI added to its family, its existing titles grew stronger. Cebu Daily News saw continued subscriber growth and record advertising revenue as it introduced both editorial and advertising innovations. Cebu's most affluent and influential professionals rely on CDN for its daily dose of comprehensive local, national, international, business, sports and lifestyle news. As Cebu's only fearless and independent newspaper, the news and

views are always relevant, hard-hitting, and people-oriented.

From being a local community paper, CDN has since gone regional, with distribution reaching to Bohol, Siquijor, Negros Oriental, Negros Occidental and Leyte. Its independence and unbiased reporting has earned it numerous awards.

Publisher awarded

In 2003, publisher Eileen Manabat traveled to the United

States to further hone her skills after being awarded the Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Fellowships for Professional Development, the first provincial journalist to receive the accolade.

CDN was also recognized for its striking photos when it won the Best in Photojournalism Award at the community press awards of the Philippine Press Institute and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

BIRTH/H8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY,
DECEMBER 9, 2003

H1



Birth announcements: family grows to 5



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ARMS AND THE MEN surround Commander Bravo of the MILF, as he keeps track of the news, somewhere in the mountains of Mindanao in April. JERRY MANINGO



FIRST READER
President Macapagal-Arroyo buries her nose in a Sunday issue of the INQUIRER before sitting down to a lunch in Iligan City in June. EDWIN BACASMAS

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CROWNING GLORY comes in June in the former Crown Colony that's Hong Kong, when publisher Isagani Yambot receives four awards for the INQUIRER from the Society of Publication in Asia (Sopa): Best in Specialized Reporting, Best Opinion Piece, and two honorable mentions, including one in news photography. DANTE PERALTA/PINOCY ABROAD

YEAR after year, the INQUIRER has been honored not only for its editorial content but for its business savvy and social conscience. On its 18th year, the INQUIRER received a number of local and international awards. And we're not yet counting the best award of all: our readers' continued support.

The Society of Publishers in Asia (Sopa) Editorial Excellence Awards in Category B:

- Stella Gonzales, Juliet Javellana, Nancy Carvajal, Joey Nolasco ("Abadilla 5: Story out of martial law pages"), Excellence in Specialized Reporting Award

- Conrado de Quiros, ("Remembering"), Best Opinion Piece

- Randy David, ("Seeing the world with American eyes"), Honorable Mention, Best Opinion Piece

- Edwin Bacasmas ("Going off into the sunset"), Honorable Mention, Best News Photography

The Society of News Design and Syracuse University S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications:

- Marlone Rubio, Lynette Villariba, Chelo Formoso, Excellence in Newspaper Design, Graphics and Photography

The United Nations Children's Fund and the Philippine Press Institute:

- Child Friendly Newspaper of the Year

- Junior Inquirer, Outstanding Children's Newspaper of the Year

- Cathy Guballa, special citation as a feature writer on children in the national broadsheet category

- Cathy Guballa ("Nicole, 9, mom to her brother, fights for her life"), Outstanding Story on Children

- Francisco Dipasupil Barros (Junior Inquirer contributor for "Goodbye, Mom"), Outstanding Child Writer Award

The Rotary Club of Manila:

- Belinda Cunanan, First Journalism Awards Hall of Fame

- Conrado de Quiros, Opinion Writer of the Year

- Jerry Esplanada, Investigative Reporter of the Year

- Ninfa Leonardia, Outstanding Regional Writer

The Catholic Mass Media Awards:

- Stella Gonzales, Juliet Javellana, Nancy Carvajal, Joey Nolasco ("Abadilla 5: Story out of martial law pages"), Best Investigative Reporting

- Nestor Torre, Best Entertainment Column

- Finalists for Best Investigative Reporting: Tonette Orejas and Russel Arador ("Case vs NPA founder shows land reform rot"), Jerry Esplanada ("Doctor's claim HMOs put profit ahead of patients")

- Finalists for Best Special Feature: Lito Zueta ("The Amorsolo portrait"), Cathy Guballa ("Thursdays with Marisette")

- Finalists for Best News Coverage: Carlito Pablo, TJ Burgonio and the PDI Mindanao Bureau ("They won't get away with this"), PDI Northern Luzon Bureau ("Queens sacrifice")

- Finalist for Best News Photo: Dennis Sabangan ("War break")

The International Association of Business Communicators:

- Golden Quill Award for Readership on Youth

THE BEST/H3



ANOTHER FEATHER is added to the illustrious cap of Amando "Doro" Doronila, who wins the Rotary Club of Manila's First Journalism Hall of Fame award in May. RANDY HORMILLOSA



THE YEAR'S BEST in 2003, as far as the Rotary Club of Manila is concerned, include INQUIRER columnist Belinda Cunanan who also received a Hall of Fame award, and investigative reporter Jerry Esplanada. RANDY HORMILLOSA



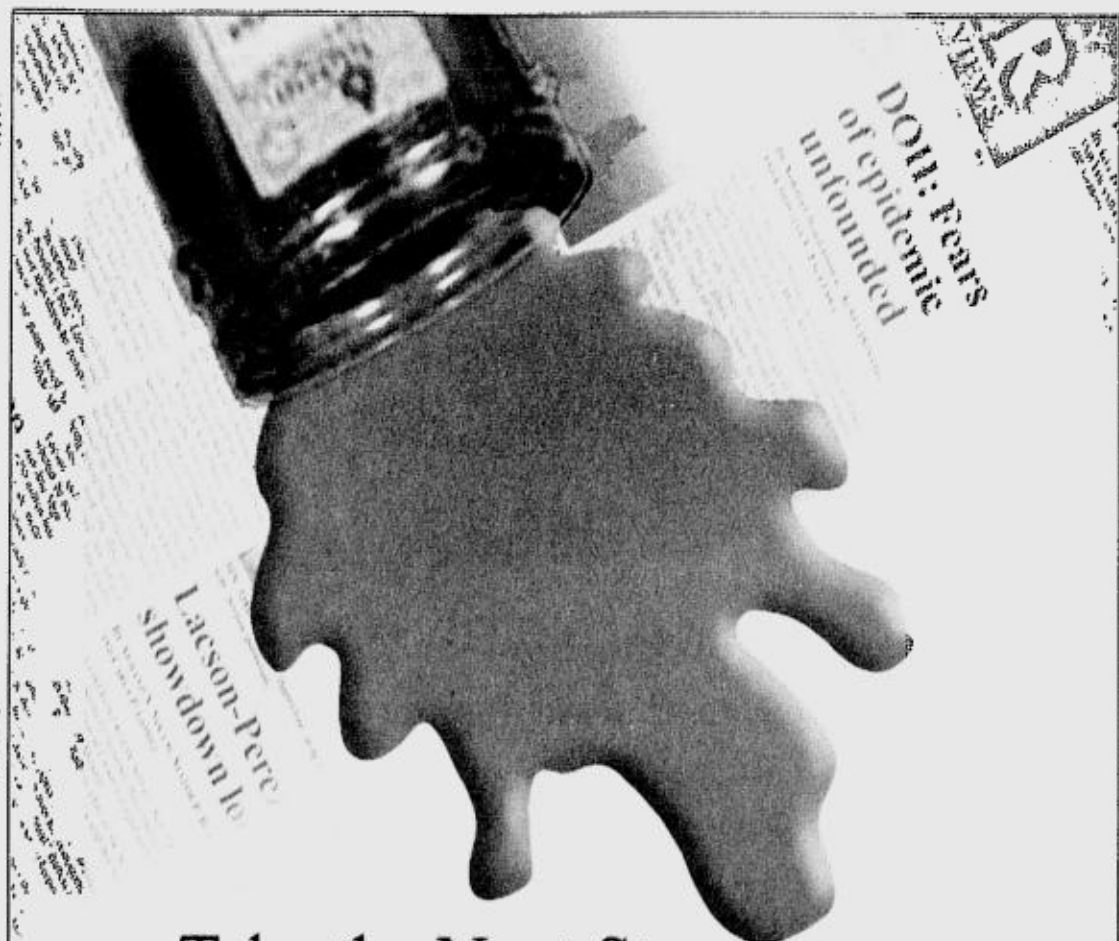
WORKING THE SLOTS, news desk editor John Nery is a finalist in the Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Excellence in Journalism for his stories on Pagcor's plan to flood the country with slot machines. Ambassador Bienvenido Tan presents the award. JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN



BUSINESS SENSE lands for Business reporter Elena Torrijos a slot in the finals in the investigative reporting category in the Jaime V. Ongpin Awards, given by Ambassador Bienvenido Tan. JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN



NO KIDDING, Junior Inquirer (JI) wins five awards in the 2nd Unicef-PPI Child-Friendly Newspaper and Journalists Awards in May. Cathy Babao-Guballa (second from left) wins awards for feature writer on children in the national broadsheet category and for outstanding story on children; JI editor in chief Natasha Vizcara, Francisco Dipasupil Barros for outstanding child writer, and publisher Isagani Yambot (right). AVP classified-marketing Donald Lim (left) joined them in receiving the awards. JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN



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I FOR ALL, ALL FOR I, as president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez (back row, middle) and editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc (front, right) join in pointing toward the right direction the editorial team led by managing editor Joey Nolasco (middle, front) that won several Society of Publishers in Asia awards in Hong Kong. Also in the winning team are (clockwise from front, left) Day Desk editor Stella Gonzales, reporter Juliet Javellana and Nancy Carvajal.

The best award . . .

From page H2

The Newspaper Association of America:

- "News Boy Kool Boy Promo," Citation, Acme Awards

The Philippine Board on Books for Young People:

- Junior Inquirer, Special Citation.
- The Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Excellence in Journalism:

- Stella Gonzales, Juliet Javellana, Nancy Carvajal, Joey Nolasco ("Abadilla 5: Story out of martial law pages"), Second prize for Investigative Report category

- Finalists for Investigative Report: John Nery and TJ Burgonio ("Pagcor to flood RP with slot machines"), Jerry Esplanada ("Mail fraud artists back in business"), Elena Torrijos ("Multitel's Ponzi scam: New face of greed")

- Finalist for Explanatory Report category: Margarita Debuque ("PEACE bonds stir political, financial storm.")

The United States Embassy in Manila:

- Eileen Mangubat, publisher of Cebu Daily News, an affiliate of the INQUIRER, Benigno S. Aquino Jr. Fellowships for Professional Development.



A DAY in Cebu Daily News publisher Eileen Mangubat's life in February included receiving the Benigno S. Aquino Fellowship for Professional Development from US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone in the presence of former President Corazon Aquino.



IN NINOY'S SHADOW, former President Cory Aquino and her son, Rep. Benigno "Noy" Aquino III (second from right), present an award of recognition to Tabang Mindanao, represented by INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Ernesto Garilao (extreme left) and Howard Dee (extreme right), on the 20th anniversary of Ninoy's martyrdom in August. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN



BIG WHEELS in the business world bestow on the INQUIRER the Gawad Kapatiran sa Industriya (Kapatid), received by publisher Isagani Yambot (middle), together with SVP for corporate services David Valdes (second from right) and SVP for finance Luis Ymson (extreme right), during the 24th National Conference of Employers at the New World Hotel in May.



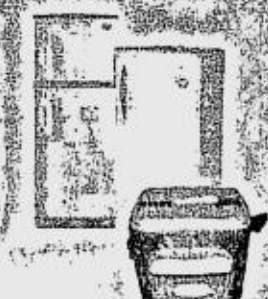
TIME OUT FOR SOLDIERS who read the INQUIRER in Camp Ilnoharis in Pikit, North Cotabato last February. RYAN LIM



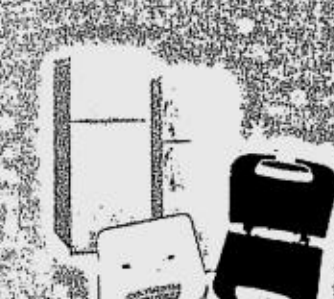
CEASEFIRE as New People's Army spokesperson Rogelio "Ka Roger" Rosal checks the news.

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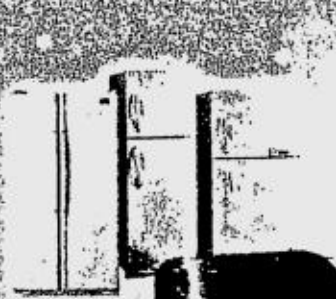
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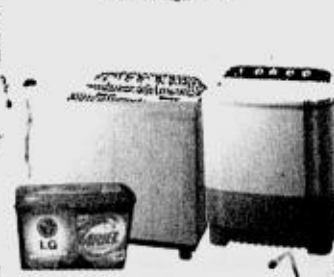
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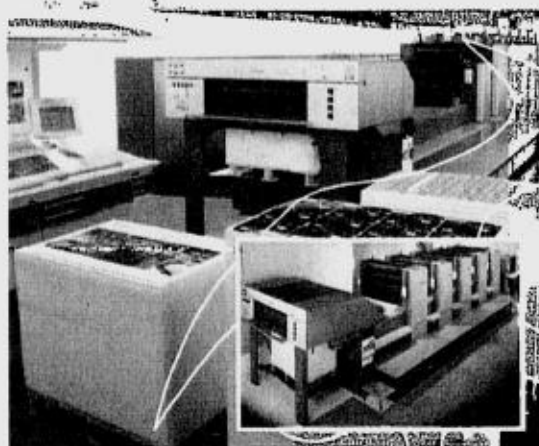
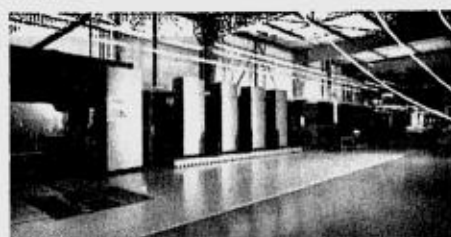
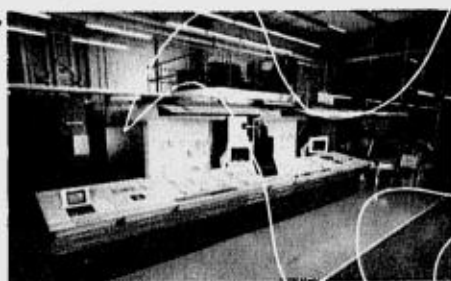


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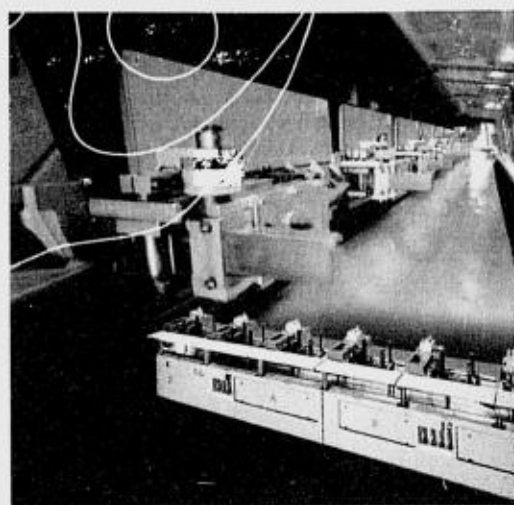
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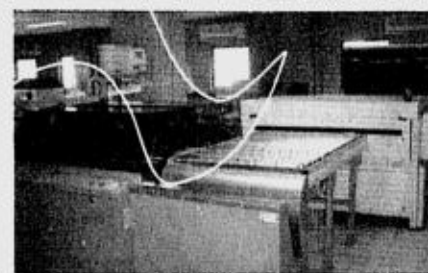
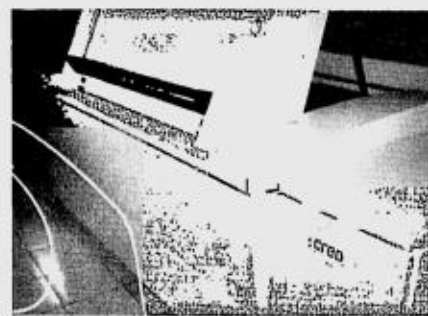
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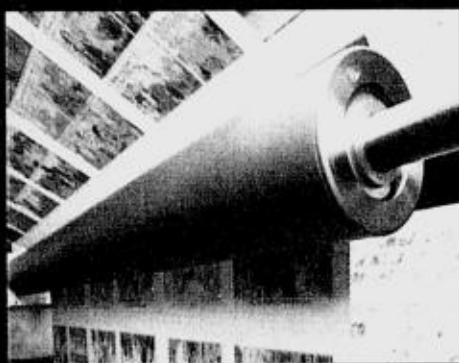


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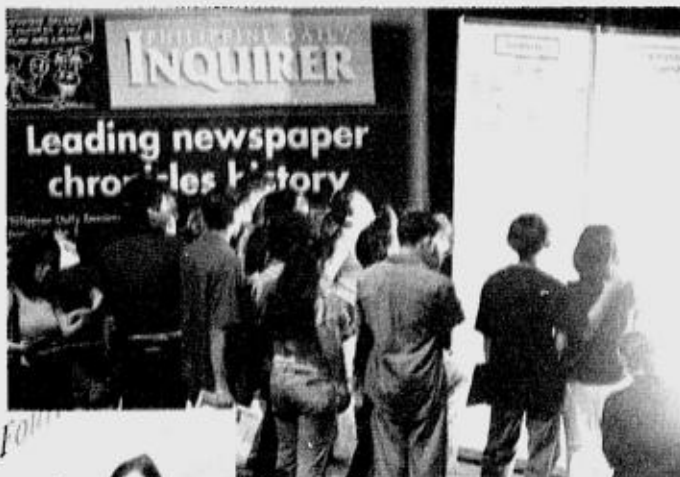
FOLLOWING the paper trail, students from different schools become eyewitness to the making of the INQUIRER.

ROMY HOMILADA



PAPER WEIGHT. Scouts from the UP Integrated School do their share in preserving the environment through the INQUIRER's New Paper Drive, which has involved more than 200 institutions in collecting 200,000 kilos of old broadsheets and tabloids, which means an estimated 3,800 trees saved.

ROMY HOMILADA



Leading newspaper chronicles history

Parenting, personalized

By Celine R. Madamba

Head, Corporate Relations Office

THE INQUIRER may have only just turned 18, but already it thinks like a responsible parent.

Aside from exposing criminal practices and writing about social ills, the company is taking care of its community of readers in a more personal manner.

From being a watchdog of society, the paper has progressed into a major participant in civic society through its community programs and partnerships as initiated by the Corporate Relations Office.

Being quite young itself, the company has always had a soft spot for the youth, believing in their capability to change the world for the better.

One participant of a recently held INQUIRER youth seminar said: "GenWhy really hit the hearts and minds of the youth in instigating (sic) them throughout all the challenges of this new generation. Truly, it was an inspiration for all of us."

Empowering the young

In the past few years alone, the INQUIRER has done much to empower young people through

its youth readership program. The program also aims to make reading a viable lifestyle option for the young through a series of interactive events that include the INQUIRER Seminar Series, Inquirer Inter-Collegiate Debating Championship, Inquirer-2bUI Inter-School Debating Championship, Inquirer Educational Tours and the Teens Read, Too Campaign.

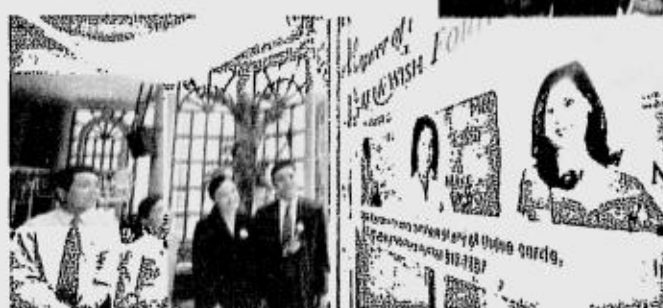
There are also special projects like the What's News Txt Game, Look Who's Reading Photo Contest and the Inquirer Readers' Club.

The International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) awarded the program the Gold Quill Award for Excellence in 2003. But the better reward is knowing how the effort has communicated to over 10,000 youths the importance of being aware and empowering them with increased confidence, conviction and insight.

Saving the environment

The environment is another cause the company actively espouses.

The annual New Paper Drive has already gathered and recycled more than 230,000 kilos of old newspapers and tabloids, saving some 4,000 trees from the saw. This it did through the participation of thousands of people from over 100 schools, households, in-



WISHES GRANTED make life a little less painful for children with life-threatening illnesses, with the help of stars like Jolina Magdangal, whose Wish phone cards were launched in May, with (from left) Make a Wish Foundation founder Eddie Santos, foundation president Celine Madamba of INQUIRER, and PLDT asst. VP Raul Alvarez.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

children's hour

stitutions and companies. More notably, the campaign was recognized with a Catholic Mass Media Special Citation.

Support has also been constantly given to WWF Philippines, working together on wildlife and environmental preservation through projects like the 2000 Wildlife Alive and 2001 Fish for Survival campaigns.

The current campaign with the esteemed institution is the Environmental Fund for Legal Action, a fundraising effort to encourage the proper prosecution of environmental crimes.

In the early '90s, the INQUIRER helped save the whale sharks in Donsol, Sorsogon, by running stories on the widespread slaughter of their species, prompting several government and nongovernment institutions to do their part. Sorsogon now enjoys a vibrant tourism industry centered on the watching of these gentle magnificent creatures.

Helping the disadvantaged

Recognizing the effectiveness of partnerships, the INQUIRER's Corporate Relations Office continues to work with organizations and institutions like Children's Hour and Habitat

GO TOWARDS THE LIGHT, students and fresh graduates do in search of their future, with the help of the Inquirer's Job Market, which went nationwide starting February.

ROMY HOMILADA

for Humanity.

Children's Hour has been able to raise more than P30 million for disadvantaged children nationwide.

To further complement the INQUIRER's major thrust of corporate social responsibility, the Corporate Relations Office regularly sponsors events like the Pasig River Heritage Marathon, Lakbay-Tribo and Tour of the Fireflies, and Department of Education Camps.

Life-saving stories

The paper has also published stories of people who could not afford life-saving medical treatment. Through the good hearts of a lot of readers, many patients have been saved from a life of physical debilitation.

How to do it better

The Corporate Relations Office also keeps abreast of what needs to be done and how to do it better through its membership in organizations like the League of Corporate Foundations and Philippine Business for Social Progress. To date, the INQUIRER is the only paper recognized as a member of these prestigious networks.

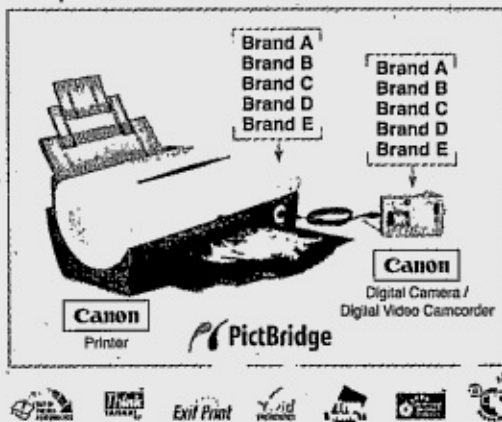
True enough, like a parent, the INQUIRER barks at bad habits and impermissible behavior. But it also does its best in ensuring the best future possible for its children.



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i560	Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution	Up to 22ppm mono/16ppm colour	4-colour inks (Think Tanks)
i865	Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution	Up to 23ppm mono/16ppm colour	CD-R printing, 6-colour inks (Think Tanks)
i905D	Up to 4800x1200 dpi resolution	Up to 23ppm mono/16ppm colour	CD-R/CD Direct printing (8 types of memory cards), 6-colour inks (Think Tanks)
CP200	Prints 4R, 3R, card & sticker labels	Fast printing in just 86 secs (4R)	Superb photo-quality prints with dye-sublimation technology
CP300	Prints 4R, 3R, card & sticker labels	Fast printing in just 86 secs (4R)	Superb photo-quality prints with dye-sublimation technology, Portable battery pack

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Balancing work with fearless fun

By **Jesse Francis Rebutillo**
Head, Corporate Human Resource Services

IN THE INQUIRER, it's not all work. PDI employees do leisure activities, too. And many times, they get to do it on company time.

A strong adherent to the concept of work-life balance, the INQUIRER created several years ago the Employee Services and Development Center (ESDC) under the Corporate Human Resources Services. The ESDC conducts activities for the employees' spiritual, mental, physical and social needs.

Strictly informal

An activity many employees look forward to is the monthly party for birthday celebrators. INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez joins these parties where she lunches, sings and plays parlor games with the celebrators. A far cry, indeed, from the staid "meet-the-president" forums held in many companies.

Once in a while, the ESDC holds a luncheon

gathering of newly regularized employees with Ms Romualdez. Like the birthday parties, these luncheons are "strictly informal."

During the third quarter of this year, the ESDC organized the much-anticipated annual bowling tournament. Attendance during this year's tournament surpassed the previous year and, as always, manifested the INQUIRER's corporate values on teamwork and excellence.

Clubs

The ESDC continues to coordinate activities with the various employees' clubs. The Mountaineering/Outdoor Club had one climb and two snorkeling activities in Batangas. Taekwondo sessions are held thrice a week. The Running Club joined 19 runs.

The Arts and Craft Club conducted workshops on needle punch, yoyo kissing ball and latch hook.

The Photo Club held monthly photo shoots, with themes ranging from nude to bridal.

The Singing Club offered singing lessons.

Next year a Badminton Club will be organized.

The ESDC also sponsored drawing workshops for employees and art workshops for children of employees.

The Center continues to maintain the day care center at the INQUIRER's Makati office. A heaven-sent assistance for working dads and moms, the day care center is open six days a week.

Explaining benefits

The ESDC held orientations for employees regarding their SSS, Medicaid and Pag-Ibig housing benefits. PDI employees also had their SSS IDs taken right at the PDI office.

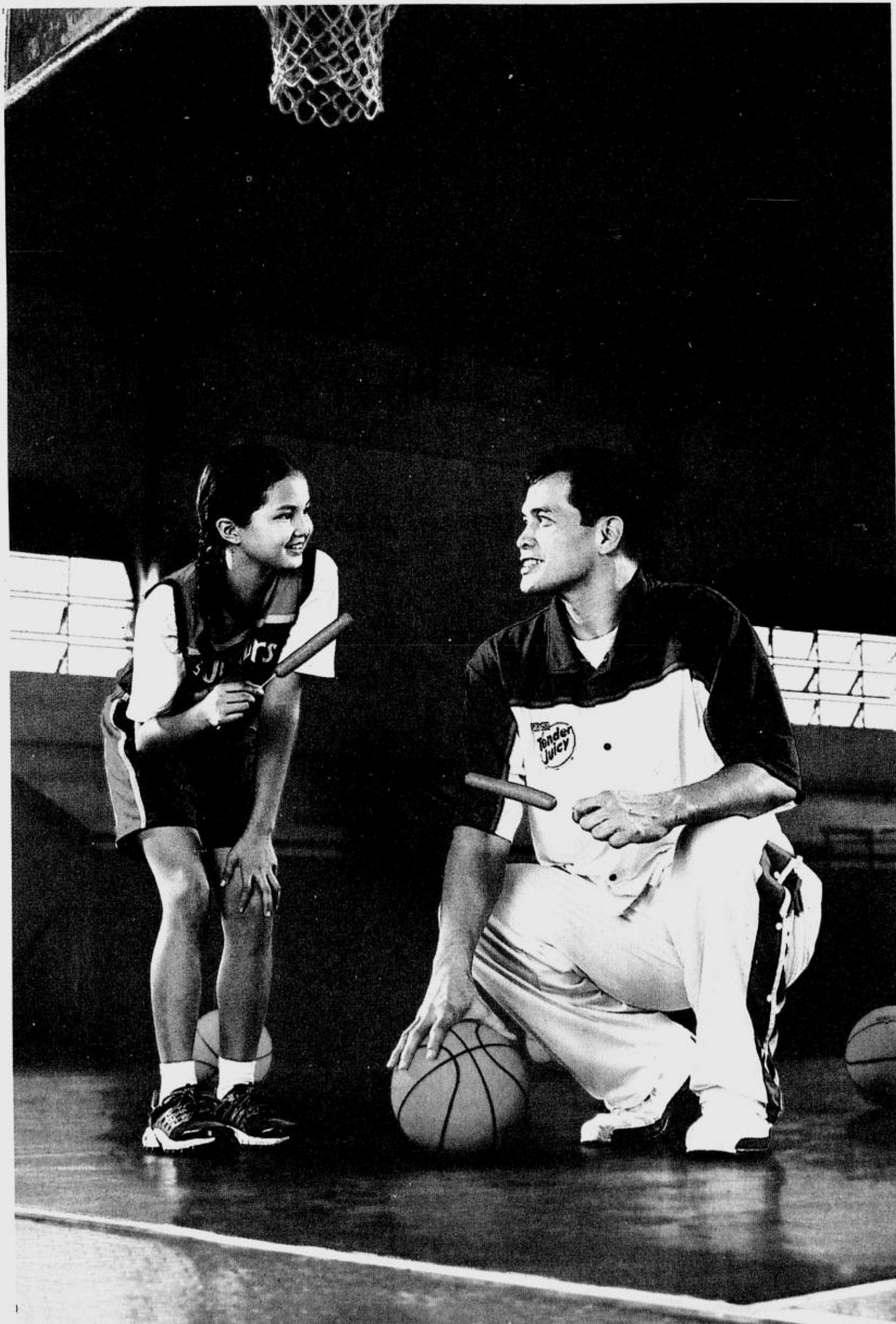
The INQUIRER also makes sure its exemplary performers are given due appreciation during the Recognition Program held every quarter. Among the awards given are Perfect Attendance, Top Stories and Photos, Top Account Executive, and recognition for courageous acts.

Spiritual

The ESDC organizes first Wednesday and



BOWL OF FUN shared by two SVPs—Dave Valdes of Corporate Services (left) and Rene Reinoso of Sales and Marketing—with other employees in the Inter-Department Bowling Tournament. (More photos in Section I)



first Friday Masses in the office.

Last April, some employees joined a Lenten retreat in Tagaytay organized by priests from Alagad ni Maria.

Employees offered flowers and their children joined the Flores de Mayo celebration.

Health

Almost every month, the ESDC facilitates Wellness Learning Sessions. Among the exciting topics discussed were: How to Improve Your Sex Life; Sex, Lies and Family; Sexually Transmitted Diseases; Prostate Cancer; and Cervical Cancer.

Aside from the annual physical examination for employees, the ESDC also coordinated bone scanning, diabetes sugar level testing and physical therapy sessions.

Every month, an Ob-Gyn goes to the INQUIRER clinic for free consultation.

During the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak, an extensive forum on SARS prevention was held. Employees assigned to cover areas under SARS quarantine were provided masks and vitamin supplements.

Special occasions

To celebrate Valentine's Day, a group of employees offered a singing telegram service. Several employees joined a dating game with actor Diether Ocampo and sexy star Andrea del Rosario.

On Independence Day, singers serenaded the employees with Filipino songs. Employees also had a grand time playing the *palo sebo* and *pabitin*.

For Halloween, the ESDC sponsored a Best in Costume contest and videoke singing and beer drinking. PDI employees' children, who came in costumes, went trick and treating around the INQUIRER's Makati office.

Social conscience

The ESDC also held activities that proved once more that the INQUIRER is an advocate of corporate social responsibility.

There was a launching of the Children's Hour. A group of energetic PDI volunteers held four outreach activities. Employees provided food during the Hands on Manila Children's Activity in Ermita, Manila. A party was held for children at Tahanan ng Sta. Luisa.

Birth announcements...

From page H1

Bandera

IPI also publishes Bandera, the No. 1 tabloid in the southern regions of the country, based on the 2001 survey of the Asia Research Organization on newspapers.

Unlike other tabloids that carry sensationalized news, Bandera is a more newsworthy and entertaining read. This is made possible by the collaboration of Bandera and the Inquirer News Service, (See story on Page G5) which provides relevant and up-to-date news and images to Bandera readers nationwide.

This innovation also empowered Bandera to publish the Bandera Mindanao and Bandera Visayas editions that feature more localized news, making it the first editioned newspaper in the country. Already in its 13th year of publication, Bandera continues to enjoy a loyal following among Filipinos with its invaluable advice columns, lotto analysis, personalized horoscope and many others—all proven to be closely followed by the C and D market.

Tumbok

IPI's fastest-growing title, Tumbok, hit the newsstands on Oct. 18, 2002. One of the youngest tabloids in the market today, Tumbok is a refreshing alternative amid troubling times with its witty headlines, ribald advice columns, show biz news, sports, and gaming tips on lotto, jai alai and horse racing. Its content is drawing a loyal following—circulation jumped more than 50 percent from the year before.

Not as naughty

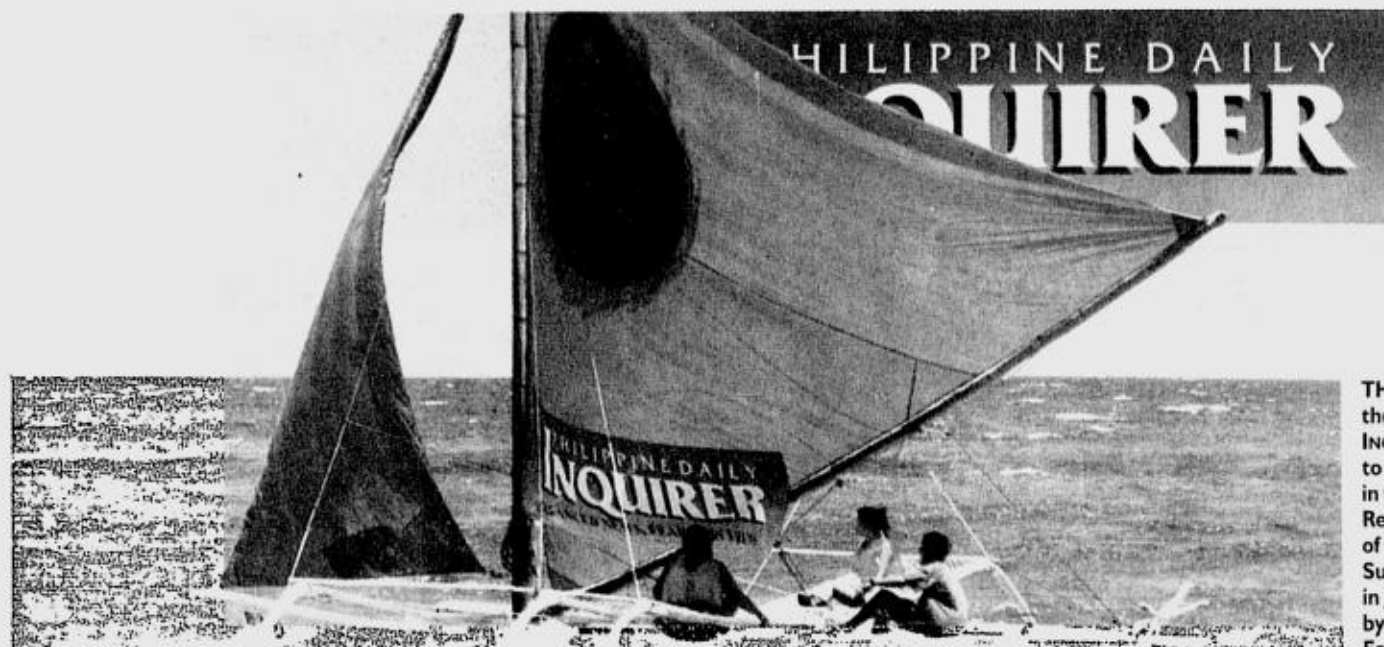
Much has been said about Tumbok and what the word means. Just to set things straight on what Tumbok is all about, here's the real deal. The meaning of the word *tumbok* according to an English-Tagalog dictionary is: to hit dead center, to be struck with a pointed object, or to be hit by a second ball in billiards. So, you see, Tumbok is not as naughty as you think. The paper is known for being an all-around sports and entertainment tabloid that has been gaining avid readership nationwide.

So while IPI will look back at 2003 as a year of many firsts, the organization is looking to 2004 for even more excitement as its family grows. Expect more birth announcements soon.

Ang buhay, parang basketball...
MAS MASARAP WITH TJ!



The Best of the Tender Years



THE SUN, the sea, the sand and the INQUIRER add to excitement in the Paraw Regatta, a highlight of the Boracay Sunset Festival in June, sponsored by the Boracay Foundation Inc.

JOAN BONDOC



THE ONE that Sunday INQUIRER Magazine editor Alya Honasan allowed to get away is a cuttlefish she encountered in the deep between Burma and Thailand.

Let the games begin

ALL WORK and no play makes a dull newspaper.

Because they will never allow the paper to be dull, the people at the INQUIRER also find time for play, which they cram into what is left in between their reporters' beats and office work and editing tasks. And as in everything they do as INQUIRER staffers, they play with a passion, not so much to win as to have good, clean fun, to enjoy each other's company—and to work out a good sweat.

From billings clerks to reporters, they climb mountains—Makiling in Laguna, Banahaw in Quezon, Pulag in the Mountain Province.

They go underwater. Sunday INQUIRER Magazine's Alya Honasan "talked" with the fish in the waters between Burma and Thailand. SVP for corporate affairs Dave Valdes played underwater hockey and also dived in Tubbataha and Anilao.

They play fast games, and slow games. Production department employees and Motoring section staffers, who usually try to beat the deadline at the office, drive to the province or to Pasay City and try to beat the clock in car races. Management and editorial officials, from the chair of the board down, play golf, badminton, basketball.

They run distances, in marathons and jogging sessions.

And then they go back to work, producing a newspaper that can be labeled anything but dull.



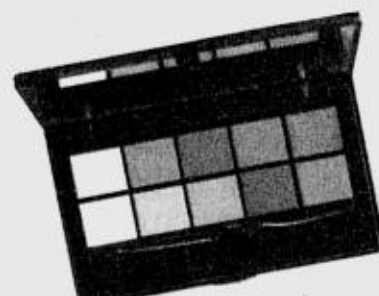
THE PRIETO PUTT, as executed by PDI chair Marixi Prieto in Hole 1 of the Hundred Presidents Invitational Golf Tournament in Intramuros in June.

JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN



TO A TEE, president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez strikes a winning pose, also at the Hundred Presidents Invitational Golf Tournament.

JIM GUIAO FUNZALAN



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Shine-on

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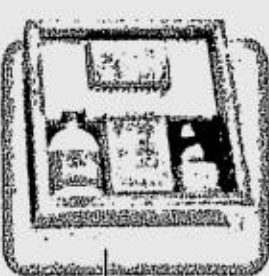
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Prestige
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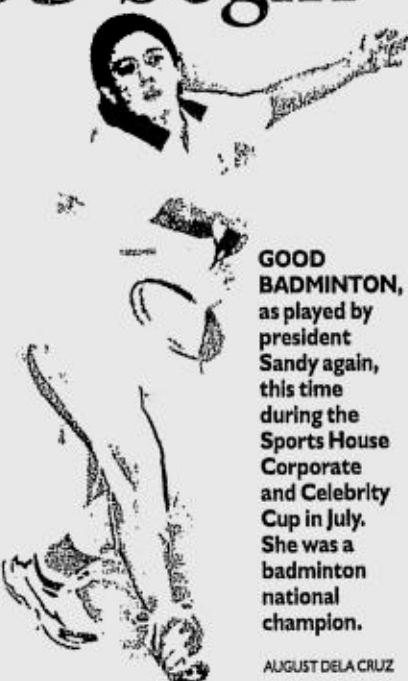
WARNING:
BEAUTY CAN BE HABIT FORMING.

Beauty bar

Let the games begin



AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH for INQUIRER employees as they reach Mt. Pulag's highest point.

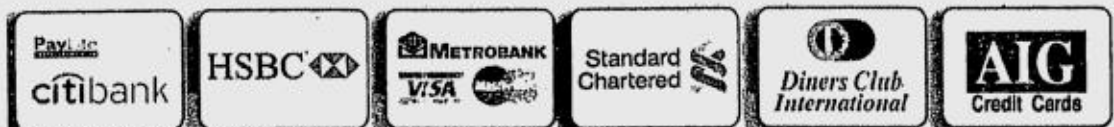


GOOD BADMINTON, as played by president Sandy again, this time during the Sports House Corporate and Celebrity Cup in July. She was a badminton national champion.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ



ALL SMILES during the finals of the Inter-Department Bowling Competition at the Superbowl at Makati Cinema Square last October.



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NO TRICKS, ONLY TREATS as children of INQUIRER employees celebrate Halloween. President Sandy Prieto-Romualdez hands out treats.

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GOOD HABITS

Management and editorial officers attend the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People workshop in March. The workshopers are led by chair Marixi Prieto and president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez (second row, fourth and fifth from right), editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc (second row, second from right) and publisher Isagani Yambot (back row, extreme right).

A stranger comes home

By Cookie Micaller

I GREW up in journalism with one foot stuck in the INQUIRER. I had worked with the defunct Philippine Journal during the Marcos years, the Philippine Star, and a Japanese news wire agency, but my closest media friends were INQUIRER reporters led by the unforgettably colorful Lindablue Romero and many of its desk people.

Thus, I've had the chance to witness the paper as it gasped for breath while the Marcos regime convulsed to its spectacular end, and then unravel to become the Philippines' most influential broadsheet.

I was a stranger looking in when the INQUIRER emerged as a byproduct of the 1986 political upheaval.

The paper started out in a cramped office in a filthy corner at Manila's Port Area. There were days when INQUIRER staff were discouraged by its editors from reporting to the office because pro-Marcos police thugs would raid its

editorial offices.

It was like a resistance paper then; it was a cornerstone of the anti-Marcos movement. Filipinos were seeing history through the prism that was the INQUIRER.

Then, there were only the INQUIRER offices and the ancient National Press Club to hang around in. At night, after work, INQUIRER reporters would extend their storytelling at the Press Club on tables filled with beer bottles and a hall choked with cigarette smoke and the clatter of after-office banter.

As the INQUIRER plodded through changes, changing owners, reportorial faces and headquarters, I went abroad to help edit newspapers in Saipan and Hong Kong for six years.

Home for good

My path again crossed with that of the INQUIRER's when its editors asked me to work as a foreign contributor from the former British colony. The SARS outbreak early

this year tied me closer to the paper.

I decided to return home for good last April and was hired as desk editor of INQUIRER Libre.

Now as one of the multitudes of faces of the INQUIRER's growing corporate world, I'm discovering that there is considerably less activism.

Matured

The INQUIRER has matured somewhat in recent years into a critical fiscalizer, struggling to be objective in every story. The reporters who've pounded on the INQUIRER's early-era Olympia typewriters have now grayed into various types of editors. The confusion of the INQUIRER's birth pain days has turned into a more efficient business structure shelled in a gleaming Makati building.

The newsroom still boils over with each political turmoil, with every investigative journalistic piece, but the activist paper has sobered a lot and settled into a central niche in Philippine journalism.



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CITY CEBU • CITY PAMPANGA • CITY DAVAO • CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO • CITY BIGUTAN • CITY LUCENA • CITY DAUIGO • CITY MARILAO

*Some
faces*

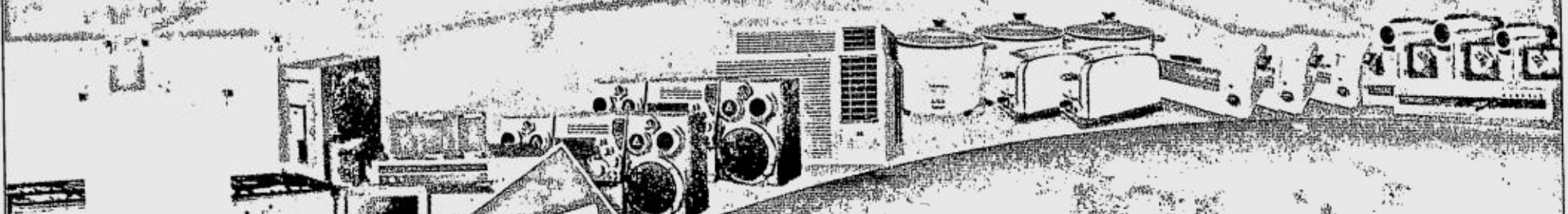
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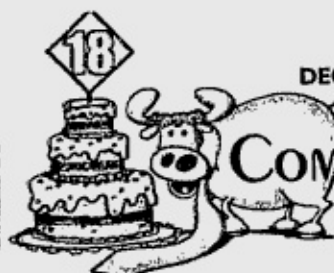
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JOHN NERY: INQ TV editorial consultant

If print journ is crazy, TV is...

By John Nery

THE COVER letter hit it right on the money.

"You must be looking for a crazy person," the applicant for reporter-producer wrote. "One who's willing to go where the danger is, to extract the information from the most elusive people and to sacrifice time with loved ones to bring the news to people one barely knows."



GROWING/J3

ABEL ULANDAY: INQ TV executive producer

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New hire makes grand entrance

A DEBUTANTE she's not. Not as young as the INQUIRER, where she's a new hire (and thus entitled to pose in style by the INQUIRER's trademark stairway), Tessa Prieto-Valdés is really 40 but going on 18. Because of the wispy figure (not infrequently swathed in feathers); the girlish, guileless laugh; the try-anything mode (from the triathlon to climbing Mt. Pulag to making like Godzilla); the wide-eyed welcome for assorted humans (and sub-humans), never mind political and fashion preferences, race, creed,

religion, hawk, dove, gender. As for her looks, she's as frothy as a debutante's cake. But on the other side of frippery, she's a much sought-after (hardworking and extra-creative) interior designer. As a Sunday Lifestyle columnist ("Tessa!") starting this year, she's a smash hit. She takes her job seriously. But never herself. Which is the best thing about this younger-than-springtime creature, next to knowing how to have fun even as she (over)works her feathers to the winds. So very INQUIRER.





If print journ is crazy, TV is...

From page J1

The applicant's self-portrait described INQUIRER journalists in less than 50 words. Naturally, we hired her.

But if print journalism is crazy, broadcast journalism is crazy in an unexpected way.

Here are three examples: Appointments for a face-to-face interview are easier to book, almost as a rule. Sources are more willing to talk; this may have something to do with the immediacy of broadcast news. But the interviews invariably start late, because it takes a lot of time to set up the camera, to angle the lights, to calibrate the monitor.

Research for a story takes a long time, way before the cameras roll. But to avoid returning to a location to save on costs, "spies" (the reporter's narrative) are often shot on site even before the story has taken its final shape.

TV routinely involves the use of state-of-the-art equipment or the latest software. But TV production remains labor- and time-intensive. Especially time. To find five minutes of quality footage (of which perhaps a few seconds will make it on air), hours of tape must be viewed.

The time has come

Naturally, broadcast veterans who are familiar with newspaper work will have a longer list of paradoxes. TV truly is a crazy medium. So what is the INQUIRER doing in it?

The short answer is: It's the right time.

The long answer is that opportunity has finally matched

objective. As the country's news leader, the INQUIRER seeks to reach a wider audience not only through a constantly improving newspaper, but also through new publications, new media, new news formats, new delivery channels.

Through partners ABC 5 and Jemah Productions, it has found the opportunity to deliver balanced news and fearless views on prime time TV.

The people behind INQ TV

The INQ TV team, led by executive producer Abel Ulanday, consists of a potent mix: senior newspaper journalists weaned on the "INQUIRER style" and who are excited about TV's story possibilities, and veteran broadcast journalists who know the secrets of the trade.

The team works with production and post-production specialists from Jemah and with the news division of ABC 5, now under new, forward-looking management.

Just like the paper

But don't let all this talk of corporate objectives and business opportunities put you off. What you can expect from INQ TV is what you get from the INQUIRER every day: agenda-setting news and commentary, must-read stories that make a difference.

In her cover letter, our applicant—her background is senior-level work at one of the country's largest TV networks—remembers what it is that drives journalists to do good work. "I miss it (TV journalism) for the difference it makes in the lives of many."

She and her kind will find a home in INQ TV.

In-house achievers

IN A continuing pursuit of excellence in reporting, writing and photography, the LRP awards was revived last June. It is open to all INQUIRER reporters, photographers and correspondents. Winners of the monthly awards in the different categories receive cash prizes.

The Best I-Team Report (investigative, special report, clarificatory) is awarded yearly. In this category, editors who coached, guided, directed and edited the reporters' work will also receive a cash prize.

The award honors the memory of Luis R. Prieto, INQUIRER executive vice president at the time of his death eight years ago.

JUNE

Best scoop/ Hard news	
2 policemen repel 20 NPA attackers	Cyrain Cabuenas
Best feature	
Traversing the nautical highway	Tessa Salazar
Best page 1 feature news story	
Rene Cayetano begets a brave family	Volt Contreras
Best positive story/ hard news	
Gov't distance learning goes the extra mile	Julie Alipala, correspondent
Best positive story/ Human interest	Mindanao bureau
Strangers help victims of sea tragedy recover	Christian Esguerra
PHOTOS	
Best news photo	
Teachers	Edwin Bacasmas
Best human interest photo	
Evacuee child	Edwin Bacasmas

JULY

Best scoop/ Hard news	
Sleepless in sweatshop	Luigi del Puerto and Romel Lalata
Best Feature	
Nothing's impossible for this paraplegic driver	Charles Buban
Best Page 1 feature news story	
25 years in Mindoro: American dons G-string, lives with Mangyans	Madonna Virola, correspondent, Southern Luzon bureau
Best positive story/ Hard news	
RP raises \$750M from bond sale	Clarissa Batino
Best positive story/ Human interest	
Couple running for hope and miracle	Alex Vergara
PHOTOS	
Best news photo	
Typhoon Harurot's fury	Erik Arazas
Best human interest photo	
Sunset at the evacuation center	Edwin Bacasmas

AUGUST

Best Scoop/Hard news	
Swiss government probes \$2-M Nani account	Clarissa Batino and Melinda Magsino, correspondent, Southern Luzon bureau
Best Page 1 feature news story	
Quadruplets: From cage to classroom	Ben Moses Ebreo, correspondent, Southern Luzon bureau
Best Feature	
U.P. Arboretum: A forest fights for its trees	Amy Remo
Best positive story/Hard news	
OFW remittances up 8% in first 6 months	Clarissa Batino
Best positive story/ Human interest	
School for the poor a "symbol of hope"	Rachelle Moral
PHOTOS	
Best news photo	
Senate hearing on coup	Jess Yuson
Senate hearing on Oakwood mutiny	Ernie Sarmiento
Best human interest photo	
Ninoy's 20th death anniversary	Edwin Bacasmas

A Fairyland Christmas

Once upon a Christmas time in a place called Shangri-La some folks from a not-so-distant land came with dreams in hand.

They wished for songs to fill the air
For dancing, food and fun
They wished for all the happiness
for each and everyone.

They wished for times like way before
when they were girls and boys
giving, loving, caring, sharing --
while playing with their toys.

Now, hanging on their silver threads
were pixies green and blue
these Christmas fairies read their minds
and made each wish come true!

Celebrate the holidays in so many ways

Children's Christmas Carols Grand Atrium, Level 2 OB Montessori Greenhills Thursday, December 11, 2003 • 4:30pm Colegio de San Agustin Thursday, December 11, 2003 • 7:00pm Sacred Heart Academy Pasig Monday, December 15, 2003 • 4:30pm St. Paul College Pasig Wednesday, December 17, 2003 • 4:30pm Chiang Kai Shek Wednesday, December 24, 2003 • 2:00pm Breakfast with Santa at Color Me Mine Level 5 • December 20, 2003 • 10:00am - 12:00pm Harpist Ms. Holly Paraiso Level 5, in front of Bayo December 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 27, 28 2:00pm - 4:00pm Santa's Nook Level 5, in front of Bench December 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 2:00pm - 5:00pm Simbang Gabi Grand Atrium, Level 2 December 15 - 23, 2003 • 9:00pm - 10:00pm	Christmas Musical Performances Grand Atrium, Level 2 Balladeer Arthur Manuntag December 5, 6, 7, 2003 6:00pm - 7:00pm Christmas Winter Fairyland A Christmas Musical Performance of Kids Acts Philippines December 14 & 27, 2003 • 4:00pm - 5:00pm World-renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers December 14, 2003 6:00pm - 7:00pm A Christmas Offering An Effic Nafas School of Classical Ballet Christmas Presentation December 20, 2003 • 4:30pm - 6:00pm Christmas Concerts December 21 - 23, 2003	The Shang Grand Christmas Show with Pops Fernandez December 21, 2003 • 7:00pm - 8:00pm Pasko sa Langit... Handog ng Batang Mandaluyong The Launching of the Mandaluyong Center for Performing Arts December 22, 2003 • 6:00pm UP Singing Ambassadors December 26, 2003 • 6:00pm - 7:00pm Goosical A Trumpets Christmas Musical Performance December 17, 18, 19, 2003 • 7:00pm - 8:00pm Streetscape Christmas Performances Featuring the country's top bands December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19, 20, 26, 27, 30 9:00pm - 12:00am
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HOLIDAY MALL HOURS
 • November 28 to December 23 - 10:00am - 10:00pm
 • December 24 - 10:00am - 8:00pm • December 25 - CLOSED
 • December 26 to 30 - 10:00am - 9:00pm • December 31 - 10:00am - 7:00pm
 • January 1, 2004 - CLOSED

Shangri-La Plaza
Life's a thrill

THE LAST WORD

PDI should not merely mirror mood of the times

By Amando Doronila

THE INQUIRER today stands on the threshold of an unfolding political era. Six months from now, 81 million Filipinos will have a new government.

Whoever will be elected president, the next administration, the sixth since the 1986 People Power Revolution, the nation will walk out of the shadow of tumultuous politics whose milieu was defined by Edsa 2.

May 2004 will be a break from the past. The nation will put behind it the political idiom that defined the political agenda of 2001 to 2003. The defining vocabulary of these three turbulent years is political legitimacy. The next government will be clothed with a fresh popular mandate that will dissipate some of the political uncertainties that have plagued the current administration bedevilled by a series of crises over its political legitimacy.

As the nation walks out of this paralyzing immediate past, so does the INQUIRER. For the INQUIRER this is not the time to look back. It is time to look forward after May 2004.

Post-2004 is a period of political and social renewal, whoever leads this nation. It can be a period of hope, and of redrawing of the political agenda that has put a heavy accent on toppling government, turbulent street mobilization, institutional gridlocks and a ferment of corruption scandals that defined the political vocabulary of the past three years.

The only excuse for the INQUIRER to look back is to examine itself on whether it has done a good job of setting the national agenda. From my point of view, self-criticism shows that the INQUIRER can be faulted for pandering to the transitory mood of streets and to the demand for unsettling political authority.

Easier path

When the newspaper readers sought illumination from bewildering political conflict, the INQUIRER tended to take the easier path of least resistance, based on the false perspective that a newspaper merely mirrors the mood and the fad of the times.

By taking this perspective, the INQUIRER was hijacked by the mood of the unruly streets and succumbed to the lust of scandal-mongering echoing the pernicious culture of the exuberant Philippine democracy, whose obsession is to bring down government and which does not allow the nation to settle down to hard work.

The press, like most important Philippine social institutions, taken hostage by this culture

that the test of freedom of the press and of democracy is to fan disruptive and rebellious tendencies—whether they emanate from the revolutionary Left, the reactionary Right or even the mindless middle-class oriented "civil society."

Function of criticism

None of these sectors ever considered that the function of criticism is not to bring down government—any government—at all costs, but to forge from the furnace of criticism ideas that can

compose the agenda of a nation seeking to be a national community, and to mold a civic mentality that puts value to getting things done. This civic culture rejects the mentality that derives vicarious pleasure from disruptions caused by political instability and economic dislocation.

Agent of disruption

These strategic sectors, including the press, have adhered to the notion that adversarialism means being an agent of disruption. From this perspective, the press, including the INQUIRER, has abdicated their agenda-setting responsibility to the capricious mood of the streets and clamorous demand of the political class for the unearthing of scandals, even though mostly unsubstantiated by evidence.

Define agenda

The agenda for post-May 2004 is different. It will no longer be defined by the vocabulary of people power—an euphemism for mob rule. The INQUIRER needs to unload the heavy freight of the street-inspired Edsa culture that has discarded institutional processes and continuity as it enters a fresh political milieu. It has to break out of this culture and, since it is a leading newspaper, it should spearhead the move toward defining the agenda of the next six years of this nation based on new issues, in search of the elusive formula for national consensus and development.

The INQUIRER cannot just be content to react to the capricious mood of self-seeking political actors and of the tumultuous mobs impatient with change. It has to define the public agenda, from its own point of view of what is in the larger public interest. This is the INQUIRER's challenge as an agent of change, that can inspire hope from our people, as it approaches the watershed that is 2004. Blazing the trail for the future of this country need not be boring. It is an exciting challenge.

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Of all the places you must come to see this Christmas, one you can't afford to miss is Eastwood City. Visit the homes that showcase a lifestyle like no other in the city, from One Orchard Road to The Grand Eastwood Palazzo to Eastwood Parkview. Homes that raise city living to a whole new level of luxury and ease, with great dining, shopping and entertainment always at your fingertips. And this Christmas, Eastwood City offers more attractions and more fun for every member of the family. Come celebrate the holidays here at Eastwood City. We won't be surprised if you choose to make it your home.

Residential condo units starting at P 2,000/month

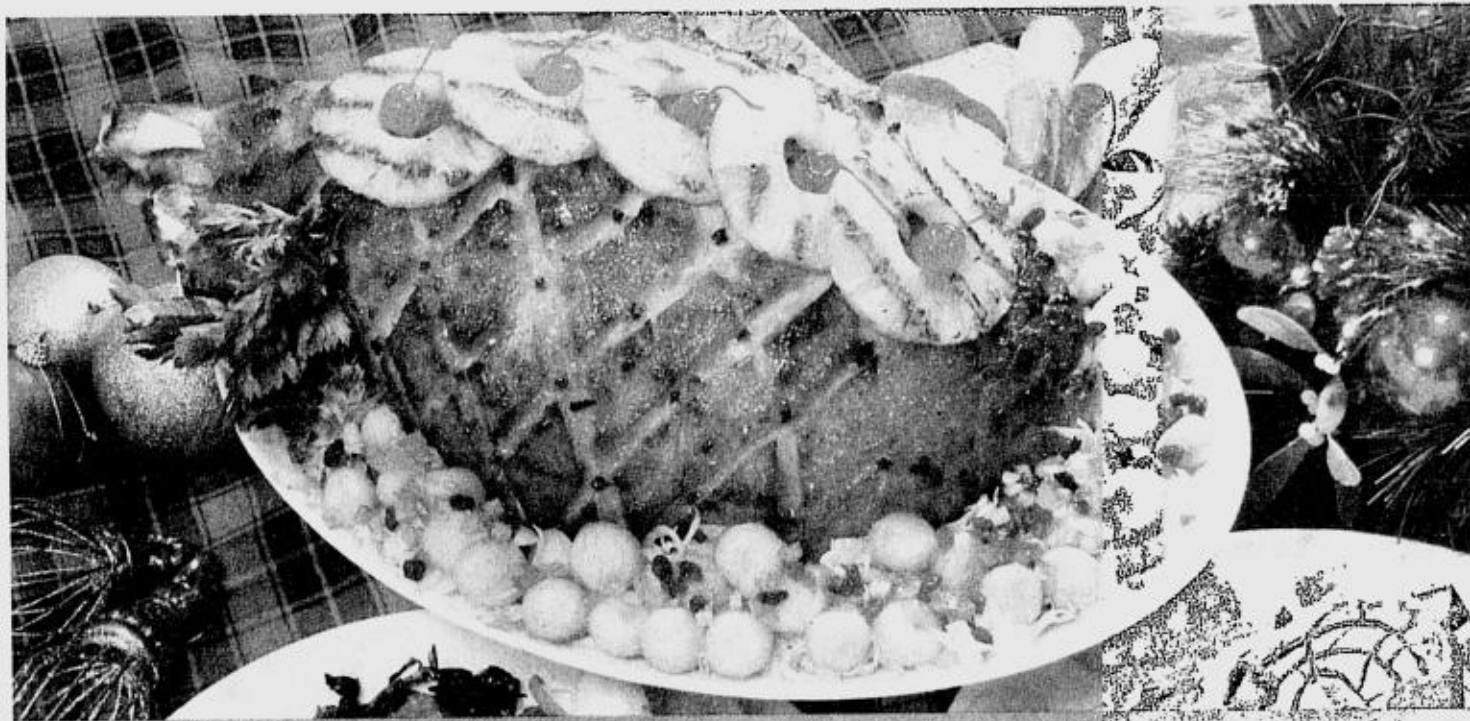
Call (632) 421-9272 for an appointment to visit the Eastwood City Grand Showroom and Information Centre, E. Rodriguez, Jr. Avenue (C-5), Quezon City.

Special treats await balikbayan visitors!

Eastwood City



Your Destination for Celebrations



For the year's most festive season, the Richmond has whipped several splendid gifts into our captivating package.

Now's the Best Time to Stay In

Check in at the Richmond and enjoy not just special holiday rates but discounts on selected shops and restaurants as well. From Dec. 16, 2003 to Jan. 15, 2004, avail yourself of these Christmas Season room packages:

Room Type	Rate Per Night	3 Nights Package*
Superior	Php 2,400 ++	Php 6,400 ++
Deluxe	Php 2,600 ++	Php 7,000 ++
Premier	Php 2,800 ++	Php 7,600 ++
One Bedroom	Php 3,500 ++	Php 9,800 ++
Two Bedroom	Php 4,500 ++	Php 12,800 ++

* Stay for 3 consecutive nights or stay for 2 nights and get a gift certificate for the third night. Gift Certificate is valid until April 30, 2004.

Inclusions

- Buffet Breakfast at The Richmond Grill
- Local newspaper and bottled water, replenished daily
- Complimentary use of Health Club, sauna and indoor pool
- 10% discount on massage services
- 2 Tickets to Kids At Work (for guests checking in on Dec. 16 to 25)
- Shopping discounts at Rustan's Department Store
- Discounts at selected restaurants and bars at Eastwood City
- Drop-off shuttle to Greenhills Shopping Center (from Dec. 14 to Jan. 4; 10am and 3pm)
- Chance to win exciting trips and prizes

Unforgettable Holiday Feasts

At The Richmond Grill, grand buffets are what we do best. For this Christmas and New Year, we have prepared an even grander Yuletide spread—from mouth-watering appetizers to sumptuous entrées to delectable desserts.



Catch Santa while visiting the Richmond and enjoy 3 goodies for all your Christmas wishes.

Cheers for the New Year

Cap the last hours of the year and welcome 2004 at The Exchange Bar. Party the night away with live entertainment, hors d'oeuvres, bubbly and favors.



The Exchange Bar opens at 6 pm. Live entertainment starts at 9 pm.

Heavenly Yuletide Treats

Indulge your sweet tooth with luscious cakes and toothsome pastries, all freshly baked everyday at The Lobby Café. Bring home a box or two and share the joy of Christmas with your loved ones.

Best Choices:	
* Holiday Fruit Cake	P140.00
* Banana Walnut Bread	85.00
* Heavenly Ensaymada	
(3 pcs. per box) (6 pcs. per box)	
• Plain	125.00 250.00
• Ube	145.00 280.00
* Day's Dream	
(8 pcs. per box)	275.00
* Savory Chicken Galantine	630.00

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